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NEA Today

WASHINGTON, D.C. MARCH 1983

A NEWSPAPER FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION VOL. 1, NO. 5

Handicapped Students: Outsiders No More

Bill Kircher

"My biggest problem is that I can't use my hands to write." Donald Bernhardy has cerebral palsy. He's also a tenth grader at East Allegheny High in North Versailles, Pennsylvania —a Pittsburgh suburb—taking advanced courses in English, biology, algebra, and

continued on page 4

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

The Heart of the Law

How strange a time—when common decency can look like the pinnacle of charity. How odd an era—when the steady movement toward inclusiveness and goodwill does not well up from within us instinctively but has to be imposed upon us legislatively.

We fight onward for legal mandates that mutual respect, civility, and a sense of fairness should make unnecessary. So it is with our attempt to preserve the strength of P.L. 94-142—the Education for All Handicapped Children Act.

Congress overwhelmingly passed P.L. 94-142 in November 1975. Considered by most to be a critically necessary supplement to Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, it aimed to help America's 10 million handicapped children become all they were capable of becoming. It stipulated a free appropriate public education in an environment that would be the least restrictive for the handicapped child's normal development. The handicapped student would no longer be an exile.

Preserving the humane intent of this law became the titanic battle of 1982. When the Reagan Administration—under the guise of "reform" and the elimination of "overly protective rules"—proposed a merciless dilution of the law's provisions, NEA and scores of allied citizen groups moved into action. They ignited a protest that showed just how deeply Americans believe that the handicapped deserve education's blessings and benefits.

The U.S. Department of Education had unveiled its revised P.L. 94-142 regulations in the spring of 1981. Educators, parents, and the press—fighting through the maze of bureaucratese—saw that the proposed changes targeted the heart of the law: the requirement that handicapped students receive their due—a free, appropriate public education.

NEA President
Willard McGuire

The proposed amendments, testified New Jersey special education teacher and NEA activist Georgia Gibson, demonstrated the Administration's "willingness to return to the 'asylum attitude' of former years." Gibson knew as well as anyone that P.L. 94-142 was an imperfect law. It had never been adequately funded, and many of its provisions had been largely ignored.

These imperfections often make life tough on teachers. Gibson's comments reflected NEA's position: the law needed refining. But the refinement would have to leave the heart of the legislation unbroken.

The Administration's proposed "refinements" threatened to break not only the heart of the law, but the hearts of handicapped children and their parents as well. A Virginia mother of a handicapped student publicly expressed her anguish and anger: "The way these regulations are designed, the message is loud and clear—'Put those freaks away where we don't have to look at them.'"

The nationwide firestorm of protest sent the Reagan Administration scurrying into retreat. Now defensive, it camouflaged its intentions beneath states' rights rhetoric.

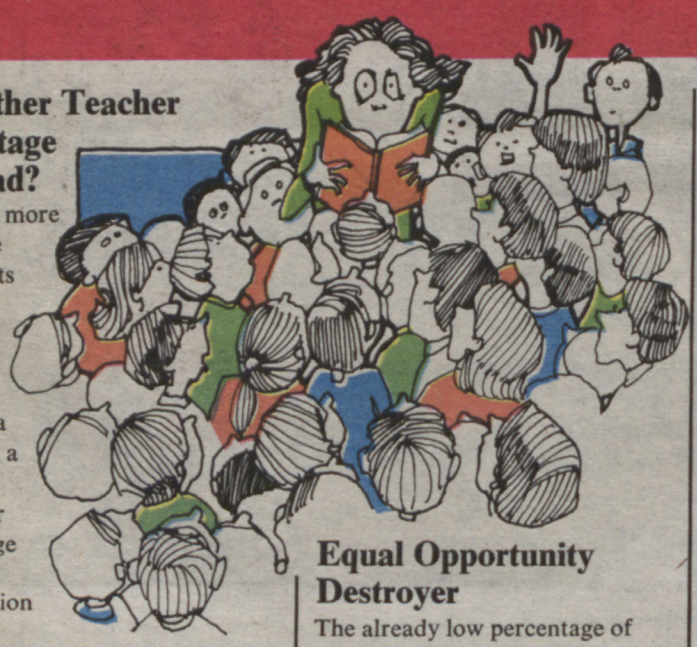
Those unconvinced included Senator Lowell P. Weicker, Jr. (R-CT), who chaired the Senate Subcommittee on the Handicapped. He noted that the Administration had earlier "sought to gut special education." Now, continued Weicker, we are to believe that "the same people who asked us to decimate the law" are interested in improving the lot of the disabled. Weicker thought it more likely that the Administration was attempting by regulatory trickery to destroy our nation's service to handicapped students.

Weicker was not alone: the Senate passed, 93 to 4, a resolution rejecting the new regulations. But the Administration is not ready for any final surrender. As we go to press, Washington observers say the Administration is planning to wait until the negative reactions "trickle off," then quietly move forward.

NEA is ready for this next ploy. Our opposition to the assault on P.L. 94-142 has about as good a chance of "trickling off" as the profits of the wealthy have of "trickling down." The Administration should know by now that its trickle theories rest on the bizarre assumption that public funds and a powerful public consensus are somehow like syrup.

Those are odd analogies. They're deceptive. And they'll never be adequate substitutes for sound public policy.

TRENDS



Another Teacher Shortage Ahead?

Unless more college students begin choosing teaching as a career, a severe teacher shortage will hit the nation by the late 1980's, predicts the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).

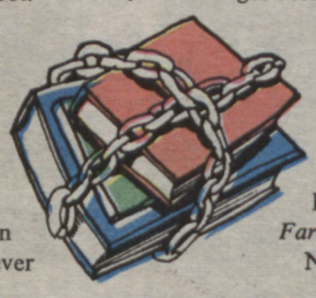
Each year from 1986 to 1990, schools nationwide will need 197,000 new teachers. But if current patterns continue, only 160,000 will be available.

The only way to avert the shortage, claims NCES, is to lure large numbers of former teachers back into the classroom or to attract new teachers by increasing salaries dramatically.

Equal Opportunity Destroyer

The already low percentage of medical students who are Black is likely to dwindle still further as a result of reductions in federal loans, according to Mary K. Schleiter of the University of Chicago's Medical School.

Schleiter told the annual meeting of the Association of Medical Colleges that the Black share of medical school enrollments rose from 2.7 percent in 1968 to 7.5 percent in 1975 but has declined ever since. She added that Blacks constitute 5.8 percent of this year's medical students and that the proportion could fall to "pre-1970 levels" because of cutbacks in federal loans.



The Best of the Banned

The prize goes to J. D. Salinger. Between 1965 and 1982 his novel *The Catcher in the Rye* attracted more attention from book-banning crusaders than any other literary work, according to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

But Salinger's lead is not safe. NCTE reports that challenges to books in high school libraries have increased steadily during the 16 years the organization has officially recorded such occurrences. Among those closing in on Salinger's lead are John Steinbeck (*Of Mice and Men* and *The Grapes of Wrath*) and Ernest Hemingway (*A Farewell to Arms*). Nice company.

Sin Tax for PAC-MANiacs

The city council in Baltimore, Maryland, recently doubled the licensing fees for businesses that house PAC-MAN and other coin-operated video games. The extra revenues will be used to help support the city's schools.

Nursing Students Along

They may have much less direct contact with students than teachers do, but school nurses are very often the first to notice a child's health problem.

With this fact in mind, the National Association of School Nurses has developed a health profile that school nurses may give to teachers to help them better identify and deal with medical conditions affecting a student's performance.

For further information, write to Carol J. Iverson, Project Director, 4227 Arizona, Grand Island, NE 68801.

Ezier Sed Than Dun

Forget ekonomiks and soshul akshun. All the nashun needz iz nu speling—at leest akording to a groop of krusading ejukaters and bizness peeple kalled Better Education thru Simplified Spelling, Inc. (BEtSS). Thay argu that simplified speling wud shorten the langwij, help stamp owt illiterasy, and rezult in grater produktivity.

If BEtSS reely sukseeds, it sez, its furst reform—droping unnesesary *e*' to kreate wurdz like "hav" and "ar"—mite be in plase bi 1985. The rest of the prosess, sez BEtSS, mite be akomplished in 20 or 30 yeers.

"This wil gro like a snobal," predikts BEtSS prezident Charles F. Kleber, "if we cud just get started." But he duz cownsul those inklined to yews the nu speling to be cawshus: "I wudn't yews simplified speling if I wer applying for a job."

NEA Today

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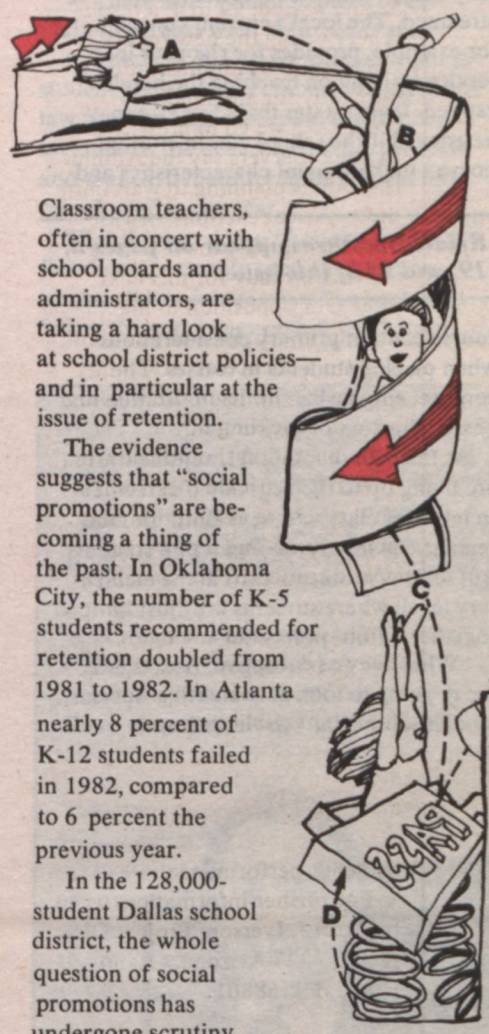
AROUND THE NATION

Associations Lead Drive For Higher Standards

Pulling the plug on the promotion machine

Tougher is the word. Tougher attendance policies, tougher course requirements, tougher criteria for promoting students from one grade to the next.

Association members in a number of states are leading the movement to "tighten up" on educational standards.



Classroom teachers, often in concert with school boards and administrators, are taking a hard look at school district policies—and in particular at the issue of retention.

The evidence suggests that "social promotions" are becoming a thing of the past. In Oklahoma City, the number of K-5 students recommended for retention doubled from 1981 to 1982. In Atlanta nearly 8 percent of K-12 students failed in 1982, compared to 6 percent the previous year.

In the 128,000-student Dallas school district, the whole question of social promotions has undergone scrutiny. Attitudes have changed and the community now generally supports the idea of having a child repeat a semester's work when it's clearly called for, say members of the Classroom Teachers of Dallas.

Still, social promotions don't die easily—for several reasons.

"Some parents would rather systematically shuffle children from one grade to another even though a promotion is not warranted," notes John Grossman, a high school history teacher and president of Ohio's Columbus Education Association.

A Dallas Association activist points out that the decision to promote a child for social reasons has often been made by the principal, not the teacher. Holding a student back is expensive, say Association leaders, and the child's reaction coupled with parents' complaints persuade some principals to back social promotions—promotions that often frustrate teachers who feel students should be held back or given a failing grade.

Despite the obstacles, Associations are carefully studying current policies, then pushing ahead with new proposals.

Beaumont, Texas, is a case in point. Members of the Beaumont Classroom Teachers Association (BCTA) felt a district policy permitting students to participate in extracurricular activities even if they'd failed three courses was far too lax.

Teachers wanted the policy changed to require passing grades in all courses.

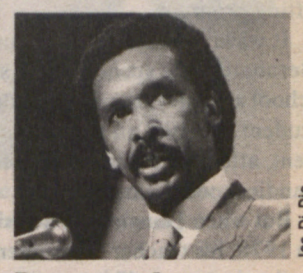
At several hearings on the proposed change, BCTA members stood their ground against some parental opposition, and the school board adopted the stricter rules.

The goal of improved attendance prompted Maryland's Montgomery County Education Association to go on record for stiffer absence penalties.

High school teachers Dorothy Roberts and Bonita Connoley, both members of MCEA's executive board, were instrumental in pushing for changes. Under previous policy, notes Roberts, a student could skip class five times a semester without an excuse and only receive a lost credit mark, which didn't figure into the grade point average.

Rick Campbell, *Beaumont Enterprise*

Students back teachers' moves to "tighten up," high school sophomore Joe White tells Beaumont, Texas, school board.



Joe Di Dio

Dayton teachers are giving more homework, Ward Rountree reports.

Beginning next fall, a student with five unexcused absences not only loses credit but also gets an "E," which counts as a zero in computing the grade point average.

"We think unexcused absences will decrease," says Roberts, "but in making the change, we were also careful to protect student rights by building in an appeals process and providing counseling for students who need it."

Other more subtle changes are taking place nationwide. Dayton (Ohio) Education Association President Ward Rountree, for example, reports that "teachers are trying hard to keep standards high in what they expect from students—and they're giving more homework."

While the movement toward educational excellence in the public schools seems to be winning high marks from most students, teachers, and parents, educators are aware that not every proposed revision is a good one.

In Des Moines, Iowa, for example, where the school district has been "tightening up" over the past five years, the Association has supported most of the changes—"including some new proposals to strengthen reading, math and science requirements" says local Association President Miles Browne, a junior high counselor. "But we want to make sure that the effectiveness of the new requirements is not measured by a single student competency test and that teachers still have a strong voice and latitude in determining whether a student passes or fails."

Probably the most controversial of all the recent proposals to beef up academic requirements involves the National Collegiate Athletic Association's revisions of rules governing student athletes.

Proposition 48, adopted in January by a majority of the 277-member NCAA, will require incoming students who want to play college sports to attain minimum scores on standard college entrance tests and to have a "C" average in high school.

The new rules have caused an uproar, particularly among Black administrators who point out that standardized testing discriminates against minorities. The controversy will likely continue right up until the NCAA changes go into effect in 1986.

—Bill Fischer

Joe Di Dio

Maryland's Dorothy Roberts (left) and Bonita Connoley helped push for stricter school attendance rules.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Handicapped Students: Outsiders No More

continued from cover

French. In gym, Donald takes swimming and archery and will soon begin a weight-lifting program.

It wasn't always this way for Donald Bernhardy. He spent his first six years of school as a full-time special education student. Donald, an above-average student, attended classes with mentally handicapped youngsters.

But when Donald reached sixth grade, in 1978, his teacher recommended that he be "mainstreamed" into a regular classroom. That teacher spent almost a year soliciting funds for a motorized wheelchair that would let Donald move around the school.

"I always knew that someday I'd be in a regular school and I'd do well," says Donald today. And he *is* doing well. Donald does all his written assignments on a word-processing computer. He's popular with both teachers and students. He gets good grades.

Donald is clearly one of the success stories for P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. This landmark federal law, now seven years old, requires school systems to provide all handicapped students with a free appropriate education in the least restrictive environment possible.

Does mainstreaming always work as well as it has in Donald's case? Are there discrepancies between what the law intends and what actually goes on? How do teachers feel about mainstreaming?

When P.L. 94-142 became a reality, teachers in suburban Pittsburgh had many concerns, and an inadequate county in-service program caused more problems than it solved, according to East Allegheny biology and computer teacher Jim Botti. "Teachers rebelled in force," he says.

Special ed teacher Tim McNamee works closely with teachers of "mainstreamed" students in Pennsylvania's Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

"What frightened most teachers here, and I believe nationwide, was the big hoopla about the law," adds John Zurich, an English teacher and president of the East Allegheny Education Association (EAEA), an affiliate of the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA/NEA).

"Teachers were concerned about whether or not special ed jobs were in jeopardy," explains Zurich. "As it turns out, we're doing very little different now from what we've always done. Of course, now we have more resources—especially the help we get from special ed teachers."

Bill Kircher

There's "no way" he could walk to all of his classes, Donald Bernhardy says. But a special motorized wheelchair lets him get around easily during the day.

At the outset, a group of East Allegheny teachers who believed in mainstreaming worked with the school administration to help allay others' apprehensions. They reminded their colleagues that one of the best students at East Allegheny was blind, and that teachers had always worked with students who broke their legs skiing or who were emotionally distressed because of traumas at home.

"This corps of teachers pointed out that we many times had made curricular adaptations before anyone suggested we *had* to," Botti says. "We had always dealt with handicapped kids."

As a member of the East Allegheny negotiating team and PSEA's Instruction and Professional Development Council, Jim Botti works to offset problems that may occur when students are mainstreamed. The local's current contract, for example, provides for rigorous in-service training on teaching the handicapped. It also states that class size may be grieved if the school administration doesn't make student characteristics and course content primary considerations when placing students in classes. The contract emphasizes individualization and personalization of instruction.

Related features appear on pages 2, 19, and 23 of this issue.

At the high school level, administrators are living up to the negotiated agreement in terms of class size, says Botti. In fact, regular classes average under 25 students. But serious problems exist at the elementary level, where students are "just lumped together," Botti points out.

"When we go into negotiations again, we're going to look at 'weighting' special students, especially those with emotional handicaps—having each handicapped student count for more than one regular student in figuring class size," he says.

East Allegheny Education Association President John Zurich recommends that teachers who aren't satisfied with mainstreaming take their concerns to the bargaining table.

"It's true—many things that should happen don't always happen under mainstreaming," says John Zurich. "But the concept is good. When teachers aren't satisfied with mainstreaming—and we're not always—the answer is to take the issues to the bargaining table."

Dissatisfaction abounds:

- Special ed teachers generally recommend placing no more than six students with emotional problems in a regular classroom. But these six are often placed in a class with about 15 slow learners who also need individual help. Teachers are expected to work in these classes without the benefit of teacher aides.
- The whole mainstreaming process—examination, referral, placement—is too long. When teachers talk about mainstreaming, one comment keeps coming up: mainstreaming is too cumbersome and bureaucratic.
- There aren't enough school psychologists to go around.
- Teachers question how students are originally placed—whether they are considered "regular" or "special."

"Sometimes I wonder if the people who set the criteria actually know what

Bill Kircher

East Allegheny teacher Larry Mauro watches as Donald completes an assignment. Two years ago, Mauro taught Donald how to use the computer to handle his written work. Now Donald aspires to a career as a programmer.

they're doing," says Jim Emanuel, a social studies teacher at East Allegheny. "I've had students mainstreamed who never should have been in special classes. When I ask the administration about this, the answer invariably is 'Our hands are tied. We're restricted to a great degree by federal and state guidelines.' "

- There is no system in place to explain to parents what their rights are.
- Teachers don't have enough input in student placement decisions. Pennsylvania law requires that classroom teachers be included in the decision-making process and that each mainstreamed student be reevaluated every year.

"But this just doesn't happen," reports Ron Beers, a county special education teacher. "Administrators often neglect to follow through because they don't want to pull teachers from the classroom and hire substitutes. This part of the law is ignored because it costs money."

"NEA has always supported the intent of P.L. 94-142 as a civil rights issue," says Sharon Robinson, NEA's director of Instruction and Professional Development. "NEA tried to get more wording into the original legislation that would protect teacher rights. That was difficult because many viewed P.L. 94-142 as strictly a student/parent law.

"To really have an effective individualized education program (IEP) as required for each handicapped student," adds Robinson, "school systems are going to have to reduce class size, using some standard formula. The problem is in getting teachers, administrators, and school boards to come to a consensus on what factors to consider: for example, should an emotional handicap weigh more heavily than a physical handicap? Should a child's socioeconomic status be a factor?

"Local Associations like East Allegheny are demonstrating that teachers are advocates for quality education at the bargaining table," adds Robinson.

Another problem is the changing attitude of local school districts. They simply aren't taking the interest in mainstreaming that they did seven years ago.

"Mainstreaming is like many government programs. It starts out as a grandiose idea. Then along the way—whether from lack of funds or diversion of funds—the enthusiasm dies out," says East Allegheny teacher Botti.

"Diverting funds may destroy mainstreaming programs," cautions Tim McNamee, president of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Education Association, "especially if already inadequate federal funds for handicapped children are folded into block grants, as the Reagan Administration has proposed."

"Being a negotiator and watching the budget," Botti says, "I can see what can happen if local school districts have complete autonomy over funds earmarked for the handicapped. As states develop a more laissez-faire attitude, local districts may use this money to balance *any* program budget."

Yet with all the problems that exist, mainstreaming can and does work—because dedicated teachers want it to.

"Without the law, the problems we have now would be even more severe," East Allegheny's Zurich says. "Take Donald Bernhardy, for example. Here's a kid who was mainstreamed and fit right in. Where would he be without P.L. 94-142?"

Donald says that when he graduates, he'll go on to college. He plans to be a systems analyst or computer programmer. He's proud of how he's helped kids understand the handicapped—whom they've often feared.

"Since I've been at East Allegheny," Donald says, "I've made lots of friends and I no longer feel isolated. I'm doing just what the law says—becoming a part of the mainstream of life."

—Marian Clayton

"Donny is like any other student," says biology teacher Jim Botti. "He has the same assignments. I discipline him in the same way."

'Mainstreaming Can Be A Scary Experience'

Norman Ose, a special education assistant in the Seattle schools for the past seven years, views the education of handicapped students from a dual perspective. He both works with special education classes and helps to coordinate "mainstreaming" programs at Meany Middle School.

He knows the fear regular teachers experience when handicapped students are suddenly placed in their classrooms. Ose attributes most of that apprehension to a lack of specific in-service training.

"Mainstreaming can be a scary experience," he says, "but we've found that after a period of transition and close communication with special ed staff, regular teachers become strong advocates of the process."

Ose also sees too little emphasis on preparing *students*—handicapped and "normal" alike—for mainstreaming. At Meany, where he helped integrate 10 teenagers with Down's syndrome into regular nonacademic classes, pre-education of all the students involved helped to ensure success.

Down's syndrome is a genetic defect found in one of every 650 Americans. The degree of mental retardation ranges from mild to severe.

"In the spring," Ose explains, "we showed a film and answered questions from students about Down's syndrome.

Seattle special education assistant Norman Ose is a strong believer in P.L. 94-142 and mainstreaming.

Then in the fall we gradually eased the Down's kids into the regular school day, allowing them first to mingle with regular students during class breaks and lunch hour and after school, before bringing them into their classes. I accompanied them to class, not only to help them adjust, but also to assist the teacher over any rough spots."

Because of this initial success, 20 more Down's syndrome students are being mainstreamed at Meany this year—as well as ten new students with orthopedic handicaps. Ose and the four other special ed assistants' workload now includes loading and unloading these students from buses, accompanying them to the bathroom, and in some cases feeding them lunch.

Ose's time is about equally divided between the special education homeroom and the regular classrooms, where he assists "his" kids when needed.

Washington State is a pacesetter in educating handicapped youngsters. House Bill 90, passed in 1967, specified access to equal and free education for all; the much later federal law, P.L. 94-142, in many ways parallels this state statute.

Parents of handicapped children lobbied long and hard for H.B. 90, Ose recalls—and parental pressure is still a key factor behind handicapped education programs.

"The parents of the 10 Down's syndrome children mainstreamed last year really put pressure on the school district," Ose reports. "Their interest and concern probably made the difference."

Ose fears budget cuts at the local, state, and federal levels may jeopardize future progress in both special ed and mainstreaming. The loss of special ed aides is a major concern, as the total number of paraprofessionals in the Seattle schools has been sliced in half over the past four years. Under the state's school salary freeze, neither teachers nor aides have received a pay increase the past two years.

Ose believes there's a critical need for more male teachers and aides at the elementary level, particularly in special ed. And for that reason he would consider returning to work at his district's preschool special education diagnostic center.

"Age 3 to 5—that's the time to identify kids' problems," Ose says, "so that students can be placed in the right educational setting from the start."

HUMAN RIGHTS

For 700,000 Migrant Children, Computers Smooth the Way

One by one, the problems of migrant education are yielding to educators' ingenuity and the flexibility of the computer.

Creation of the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) in 1968 provided a nationwide computer network that's bringing new continuity and consistency to the education of students who may change schools—and textbooks—more than a dozen times a year.

MSRTS, funded by the U.S. Department of Education and based in Little Rock, Arkansas, lets teachers exchange academic and health information about some 700,000 to 800,000 children of migrant farmworkers, fishers, and pulp workers. That is an estimated 85 to 90 percent of the U.S. total.

When a migrant student leaves a school, his or her teacher sends the student's records to the school's assigned MSRTS computer terminal—one of 177 distributed around the country. When the student enrolls in another school, that school in turn requests the records through its assigned terminal.

Communication is still far from instant. From terminal to terminal, the records travel quickly. Between the school and terminal, however, they may move by phone, courier, or letter. To end this delay, MSRTS will eventually be connected to computers already in schools.

Until recently, MSRTS lacked a detailed, objective way to communicate a student's level of achievement. Permanent records gave grade level and

Roger Buchanan

Each time this migrant child changes schools, his records move with him via MSRTS.

courses taken—but only a sketchy idea about what the student had actually learned. Now, developments in the MSRTS have ended teachers' need for time-consuming tests to find out just what each new migrant student knows and doesn't know.

Specialists first broke down the skills of reading into their simplest components—a breakdown that will have many uses beyond migrant education.

More than 3,000 teachers tested the breakdown over a three-year period. Next, 28 publishers cross-referenced these skills to specific pages in 132 widely used elementary texts.

Now, when a migrant child moves on from a school, his or her teacher can enter into the MSRTS network the codes for the last three skills the child mastered—and three that he or she is presently learning. From this information, the student's next teacher can figure out where to start the child in the new text.

Beginning this month, however, teachers in New York State will no longer have to perform even this last step. The MSRTS computer now "knows" what text is used in each class of each New York school that migrant children attend. It will send the receiving teacher the page number in the class's reading text appropriate for the student's level of learning.

By fall, teachers in Arizona, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Washington State will have the same service. Eventually teachers in other states, too, will be able to use it, and similar referencing of math materials will soon be part of the system.

High schools face a different but related problem: keeping track of whether a migrant student is accumulating enough credits, in the right courses, for graduation.

The newly developing Secondary Exchange Program will allow each student's chosen "home" high school to enter the courses the student has taken and those he or she still needs to take for graduation. Here again, precise, standardized descriptions of the courses will be needed if the system is to work.

The MSRTS system has brought migrant education a long way in its 15 years of operation. Further advances are possible if federal funding continues.

For the son or daughter of a migrant family, schooling remains a rapid succession of schools and teachers—but through increasing coordination, every new classroom the migrant student enters can be a true home room.

ED's Civil Rights Office Plans Year-Long Coffee Break

The National Education Association, along with groups like the NAACP and the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights, has sharply criticized the new annual operating plan of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

The plan, charges NEA Human and Civil Rights Director John Cox, "reflects the Administration's lack of interest in vigorously enforcing civil rights law."

OCR's operating plan is supposed to spell out what the agency proposes to do and how much it will spend on each activity. But the new plan is vague.

"It is impossible to know how the resources are divided among the three major functions (investigating complaints, checking on compliance with civil rights regulations, and giving technical assistance), let alone within those functions," explains NEA Government Relations Director Linda Tarr-Whelan.

OCR's 1983 plan relies heavily on predetermination settlements (agreements reached without a full-scale investigation or formal findings). This method of enforcement has often left blatantly discriminatory actions and practices intact, NEA points out in a letter to OCR.

Further, the plan hands OCR's 10 regional offices the responsibility for checking on compliance with regulations, but does not set any standards to make sure a balanced range of issues is investigated nationwide. Under the plan, then, one region could choose to conduct no compliance reviews concerning discrimination against the handicapped—while another region might choose to examine little else.

The 1983 plan gives much more verbal emphasis than ever before to "technical assistance" (still, of course, without providing budget figures). But OCR apparently plans a rather odd kind of assistance. It intends to concentrate on finding state laws that resemble federal civil rights laws—presumably in order to declare federal enforcement unnecessary. OCR technical assistance should, rather, help the states understand and comply with those federal laws, NEA's Tarr-Whelan points out.

As NEA's critique sums it up, the OCR plan indicates that either directly or indirectly, "the government is attempting to shift its enforcement responsibilities to the states and regions."

WASHINGTON WATCH

The 97th Congress closed out its lame-duck session (some would say not a moment too soon) by approving a nickel-a-gallon gasoline tax hike and a continuing resolution for the 1983 fiscal year budget that includes about $15 billion for Department of Education programs. That's about $6 billion more than President Reagan wanted.

High on the "must do something about" list for the 98th Congress: Social Security, the 1984 budget, 10.8 percent unemployment, and a still stagnant economy.

As *NEA Today* went to press, the new Congress was expected to give its stamp of approval to a series of recommendations proposed by the National Commission on Social Security Reform. NEA has two problems with the Commission's positions: they do not recommend restoring the Social Security student benefit, and they fail to address the issue of low benefits for women. As recommended, the reforms would defer the cost-of-living adjustments due this July to next January, speed up scheduled payroll tax increases, and tax one-half of Social Security benefits for individuals whose other retirement income exceeds $20,000 a year ($25,000 for married couples filing joint returns). These changes plus others would bring in an estimated $170 billion in new revenues to keep the Old Age and Survivor's Insurance fund solvent through 1990.

Joe Di Dio

Robert M. Ball, former U.S. Social Security Commissioner (1962-73) and a member of the National Commission on Social Security Reform, details the system's financial problems at NEA's 1982 Legislative Conference in Washington.

A related measure approved in the closing days of the lame-duck session extends by another seven months the exemption of women from Social Security's "pension offset." That provision reduces the so-called spousal benefit dollar for dollar by the amount of any public pension. Congress applied the offset rule to men in 1977.

The President's State of the Union address contained a couple of new wrinkles that would have major impact on public education. They include a proposal to allow parents to defer income taxes on money set aside in special savings accounts for their children's college educations. These would be similar to Individual Retirement Accounts in which money is put aside for retirement. The President is also expected to seek congressional approval to set up a voucher system under which low-income families would receive their share of federal education aid to use at public or private schools of their choice. The Administration will likely couple these ideas with another push for tax credits for private school tuitions. NEA opposes both voucher and tuition tax credit schemes.

The Administration's 1984 budget was to go to the Hill in late January and is likely to include $30 billion worth of new cuts in domestic spending, including education, small cuts in defense, and a $200 billion deficit.

There's no shortage of well intentioned bills floating on Capitol Hill that would in part address the shortage of math and science teachers. NEA Secretary-Treasurer Mary Hatwood Futrell spoke to that subject during late January hearings before the House Education and Labor Committee. Futrell offered the American Defense Education Act (ADEA) as the proper vehicle not only to increase the numbers of math and science teachers but also to help the U.S. meet the challenges of an increasingly complex technological age. The Democratic response to the President's State of the Union message supported ADEA as part of a national commitment to public education.

Among the new appointees to four House committees that are key to education-related bills—Ways and Means, Budget, Appropriations, and Education and Labor—are many representatives who were elected or reelected last November with strong NEA-PAC support.

Meanwhile, it's going to be easy to remember the number of the newly reintroduced Equal Rights Amendment. House Democratic leaders gave the measure the prestigious "H.R. 1" tag. The NEA-backed bill has 257 cosponsors in the House, 57 in the Senate.

State Side

MID-ATLANTIC

When this year's Kentucky Derby is run at Churchill Downs in May, among the lucky grandstand viewers will be a member of the Kentucky Education Association and his or her guest. The winner will also receive two nights in a nearby hotel and $100 in spending money.

The fortunate KEA member's name will be drawn from among contributors to "Kentucky's NEA-PAC Derby," which has already raised over $30,000 in direct donations and payroll deductions. The money will be used by NEA's Political Action Committee to back pro-education candidates for federal office in 1984.

KEA members who contribute $25 receive a "starting post" pin; $50, a "daily double" pin; and $100, a "winner's circle" pin. The local and district Associations generating the highest per-member contributions to the NEA-PAC Derby will each be awarded one paid round trip to Washington, D.C., to help lobby in support of public education.

MIDWEST

The Minnesota Education Association has charged the state legislature with dealing inequitably with public employees—including more than 50,000 teachers—in its efforts to resolve the state's current budget crisis.

The legislature plans to decrease the state contribution to public employees' retirement program and increase employees' contributions for a one-year period. For teachers, this will mean an additional deduction of some $500 from their paychecks.

"No one group, let alone teachers, caused the budget shortfall," declares MEA President Don Hill. "Therefore it's not fair to force public employees to carry such a large share of the burden."

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees is challenging the state, the legislature, and the governor in court, charging an unfair labor practice and breach of contract. MEA has joined AFSCME in this court challenge.

The case was heard in U.S. district court in January; a decision was pending at press time.

PACIFIC

As state lawmakers prepared to grapple with an unprecedented $2.5 billion budget deficit, the Washington Education Association was on the road helping to educate civic leaders on the seriousness of the state's unstable tax base and its impact on public services.

WEA's efforts are part of a coalition campaign that includes the state employees' union and five prominent corporations—Boeing, Weyerhauser, Pacific Northwest Bell, Burlington Northern, and Rainier Bank.

"Our story explains how the state got in this mess," says WEA President Reese Lindquist, "and how our poor financial health threatens public services and economic growth."

The coalition's information campaign is designed to give legislators the back-home support they need to enact tax reform measures to solve the state's problems.

The Hawaii State Teachers Association is asking NEA members throughout the nation to help HSTA members pick up the pieces in the wake of a Thanksgiving Day 1982 hurricane that caused more than $200 million in damage.

Hurricane Iwa, the first to strike Hawaii in 23 years, caused particular devastation on the island of Kauai, where more than 400 HSTA members live.

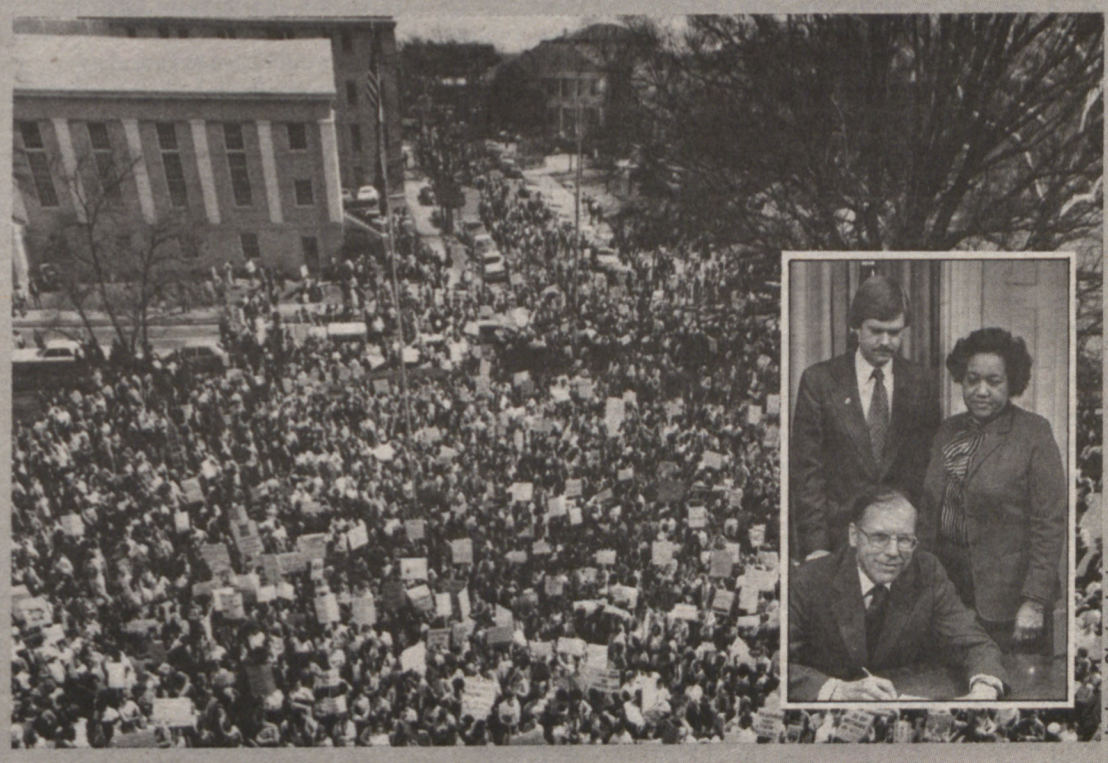
"Nothing we can do can completely replace what our members have lost," says HSTA President Haroldeen Wakida, "but at least we can help ease their suffering."

The Association set up a $15,000 relief fund to aid disaster victims; NEA chipped in $25,000. HSTA is also offering interest-free loans. A special committee will screen all requests for aid.

Members who wish to help may make checks payable to HSTA Kauai Teachers Relief Fund and mail them to HSTA, 2828 Paa Street, Suite 3150, Honolulu, HI 96819. Contributions are tax-deductible.

BREAKTHROUGH IN MISSISSIPPI

Lobbying Push Wins School Reforms



Jackson Clarion-Ledger

When 10,000 MAE members marched on the Mississippi capitol last spring, they were just beginning their campaign to upgrade the state's schools. (Inset) MAE Pres. Mary Gates and Exec. Sec. Tony Rollins watch as Gov. Winter signs landmark education reform bill into law.

It all began in March 1982, when some 10,000 members of the Mississippi Association of Educators (MAE/NEA) marched on the state capitol, demanding that legislators give long overdue attention to Mississippi's substandard public schools.

With MAE determined to upgrade the state's education system and with a strong ally in the governor's mansion, the stage was set.

Gov. William F. Winter, whom MAE had endorsed in 1979, set up a series of forums across the state to discuss the schools' major needs: publicly funded kindergartens, increases in abysmally low teacher pay, effective compulsory attendance laws, and much more.

Local MAE affiliates' publicity made sure each forum was packed with concerned citizens. Growing public support for education reform was becoming obvious.

In December the governor called the legislators into special session to deal just with education. "It's now bullet-biting time," he told them. "It's time to quit studying and surveying and filing reports. It's time to get off our bottoms to get Mississippi off the bottom."

Gone was the reluctance to act that had killed education bills in two previous sessions. Both houses quickly approved, by wide margins, a sweeping package of education reforms—and a hike in sales and income taxes to cover the more than $100 million cost.

The landmark new law provides free public kindergartens, a salary boost of at least $1,000 a year for all teachers, stiffer school accreditation rules, reading aides in the primary grades, and a compulsory attendance requirement with teeth in it.

Proud of Association leaders' and members' successful lobbying efforts, MAE President Mary Gates says the long-awaited reforms "will have far-reaching effects on the education system and on the children."

Adds MAE Executive Secretary Tony Rollins, "It shows what teachers and a concerned public can do when they work together."

NORTHEAST

Despite budget cuts and 5,000 teacher RIFs, Connecticut citizens still think highly of their public schools and teachers. A recent poll commissioned by CEA shows that 75 percent rank the public schools as "fair" to "excellent." And 81 percent rate teachers in their local schools "the same" as or "better" than teachers 20 years ago.

The Connecticut Education Association is embarking upon a long-range community relations and media effort to make sure citizens retain that high opinion.

Six dollars of each CEA member's dues has been set aside for the campaign, which features television, radio, and print ads, a public relations kit for local associations, and pamphlets for the public.

WEST

"Public education—Build Your Life on It." That's the theme of a new year-long campaign in Colorado.

The Colorado Education Association has joined with the governor, the department of education, and the state school board, as well as with groups representing Colorado school administrators, parents, and others to plan the campaign.

Gov. Richard Lamm kicked off the project in January by proclaiming 1983 the "Year of the Public Schools."

Local school districts are forming coalitions of educators, parents, board members, and administrators to promote the public schools in their own communities.

Project plans include training for educators in surveying community attitudes and marketing public education. A critical issues conference is planned for next fall.

"It is time for all of us involved in public education to work together to raise the public's awareness and generate support for our public schools," comments CEA President Gordon Heaton. "This campaign, supported by the prestige of the governor's office, is a major step in achieving that goal."

Wondering why your state appears in the "region" it does? You're not alone. See explanation on page 26, column 5.

Local Look

IOWA

"We have all the committees, and we get to all the conferences and regional meetings," Ventura Education Association leaders report proudly.

What's so special about that? Enrolling almost every teacher in this rural northern Iowa community, VEA has a grand total of 29 members.

Members take turns attending school board meetings to keep themselves informed and the board on its toes. More than a third of the membership puts in time on the Association's negotiating committee.

Political action also attracts VEA members, who do their share of campaign telephoning and letter writing. When the last state finance bill came up, members made the two-hour drive to Des Moines to help the Iowa State Education Association pack the legislature's galleries with 1,000 teachers.

The secret of VEA's accomplishments? "You volunteer for a lot of things," members say, admitting, "We're spread thin."

CALIFORNIA

Gilroy teachers are back in the fold, having ousted the American Federation of Teachers local that was their bargaining agent for three years.

The beginning of the end came at the start of the school year when teachers overwhelmingly rejected a tentative contract agreement that included no salary increase and numerous givebacks of hard-won gains. A few weeks later, a majority of 345 teachers voted for GTA.

GTA President Esther Forman says the Association is bargaining now to make sure its next contract meets members' needs.

The Gilroy victory gives the California Teachers Association a total of 738 bargaining units, representing 176,000 certificated employees.

NORTH DAKOTA

The Grand Forks Education Association has lots of super teachers, and GFEA lets them know they're appreciated.

Each month the 490-member Association presents a "Super Teacher" award, recognizing a member who has called positive attention to education in the community.

"Super" accomplishments recognized so far include writing an editorial on teacher activism, inviting over 100 citizens to take part in classroom activities during American Education Week, furnishing a one-room schoolhouse for a centennial celebration, and publishing a book on speech and language pathology.

"The Super Teacher award has put new life into our PR program," says Enid Smeall, GFEA president. "It's given us a way to spotlight our teachers and to encourage them to think of PR in an individual way."

'FRIENDLY BUT FIRM' STANCE GETS RESULTS IN TENNESSEE

A Big Week for Big Memphis Affiliate

Six thousand Memphis Education Association members are still patting each other on the back over their two big wins in a single week in December.

First they engineered approval of a local sales tax that's expected to generate $13 million a year for the school system. Then later in the week they resolved a whopping 1,500 grievances.

The Association-backed tax increase had been on the ballot in November on a countywide basis—and lost. It was put before the city voters again just 28 days later, when they returned to the polls for a runoff between candidates for mayor.

MEA analyzed voting patterns after the November loss and targeted prime areas for the second try. Already allied with parent and school administrator groups, the Association now joined forces with city employees, other school employee organizations, the business community, and the NAACP.

MEA once again conducted get-out-the-vote training—and canvassed door-to-door in targeted areas. In those areas, the number of favorable votes almost doubled between the first and second referendums.

The tax passed by a decisive 60-40 margin. "The big vote for the sales tax shows there is strong support for Memphis public schools in spite of the negative things we hear," MEA President Bettye Donahue says.

Meanwhile, amid the referendum campaign, MEA was fighting a major contract enforcement battle. The contract called for a switch from monthly to biweekly paychecks beginning in January 1983. In late November, however, the school board announced that despite a year's lead time, it would not be able to get the computers ready by January 1 and would have to cancel its commitment.

"Memphis teachers aren't casual about their contract *or* their money," President Donahue points out. Some 1,500 teachers filed individual grievances along with an overall MEA grievance on behalf of all Memphis teachers.

"The board found it hard to explain to 6,000 teachers that its fancy, expensive computers can't divide by two," Donahue adds.

Rather than face MEA's challenge, the school board agreed to honor its commitment. Biweekly checks went into effect on January 1.

"The Association's efforts to gain respect as a friendly but firm organization are paying off in the community, with the board of education, and with our members," Donahue reports.

Peg Shafer

Canvassing door to door, Memphis Education Association President Bettye Donahue explains to a voter how proposed tax increase will benefit city schools.

TEXAS

The new year got off to a great start for 740 Fort Worth teachers as they shared a total of $250,000 in wage adjustments. The salary hikes resulted from a lawsuit filed against the school district by the Fort Worth Classroom Teachers Association.

The teachers, all of whom were hired from outside the district before 1979, had been shortchanged by being credited with only half their previous teaching experience.

The Association's suit charged that the methods used to compute the teachers' salaries violated the constitutional guarantee of equal protection.

A federal judge okayed the out-of-court settlement last fall.

LOUISIANA

For at least five years, the American Federation of Teachers had targeted Tangipahoa Parish, outside New Orleans, for takeover—and last year it actually managed to enroll a majority of the teachers as members.

At the time, the rival NEA-affiliated Tangipahoa Association of Educators and the AFT local were involved in a vote on whether teachers in the parish would have collective bargaining.

The Feds, anxious to win bargaining rights at any cost, quickly sold teachers down the river, accepting a school board condition that they sign a no-strike clause.

"TAE, rather than *mis*represent teachers, refused to buckle under and wouldn't sign the clause," says TAE President Pat Vitter. "A majority of teachers saw who stood up for their rights, agreed with TAE, and voted not to accept collective bargaining under the board's condition."

The result? TAE more than doubled its membership last year, from 196 to 410.

"We still want collective bargaining and are working toward that goal," Vitter adds.

FLORIDA

Some 1,200 school office personnel in the Fort Lauderdale area voted recently for Association representation in bargaining.

By a margin of nearly two to one, they opted to replace their independent bargaining agent with the Broward Educational Support Personnel Association (BESPA), an affiliate of the Broward County Classroom Teachers Association.

BESPA President Bettye Bradshaw reports a membership organizing drive is now under way—along with efforts to enforce the existing contract and hold the school board to a previously agreed-on pay settlement.

The Broward County CTA bargains for 7,600 teachers; its Paraprofessional Association represents some 860 teacher aides. Now another new CTA affiliate is seeking the right to bargain for 1,700 bus drivers and custodians. An election was pending at press time.

NEW JERSEY

The Maurice River Teachers' Association has struck a blow for more open public meetings. Thanks to a legal battle waged by the Association, people in Cumberland County can now videotape public meetings—including school board meetings.

The judge's decision is likely to set a precedent throughout New Jersey, which has had a "sunshine" (open government) law since 1976.

The case arose when teachers tried to videotape an October school board meeting as a tactic to pressure the board to return to the bargaining table. The board suspended the meeting rather than let the tape roll.

Cumberland County Chancery Court Judge Edward Miller first issued a temporary restraining order against the taping. But after studying the question, he ordered the board to let its meetings be taped, as long as certain guidelines are followed.

IN THE CLASSROOM

THE SAGA OF 'Steggy'

For determined Colorado students, some old bones became the center of a multidisciplinary curriculum.

by Margaret Malsam

Steggy had lain there for about 150 million years. No one noticed. And when finally she (or perhaps he) was found, few cared—only the paleontologists and academicians and a few hobbyists.

Maybe that indifference is what stung Ruth Sawdo's fourth graders into action. When they learned of Steggy, their interest became insatiable. And their fascination became a mission: they vowed that Steggy—the recently unearthed fossilized remains of the stegosaurus dinosaur—would become Colorado's official state fossil.

From their classroom in suburban Denver's McElwain Elementary School, the students would launch a campaign to persuade the state legislature to grant this extinct reptile formal recognition.

Sawdo saw the potential: a chance to integrate—through a lobbying campaign—lessons in social studies, natural science, English composition, art and photography, library and research skills. She turned her students loose.

The class first contacted State Senator Polly Baca Barragan, who agreed to help. On January 27, 1981, she introduced Senate Bill 270 to establish the stegosaurus as the state fossil. The students, meanwhile, began rehearsing the steps necessary to pass legislation.

When the bill reached the Senate Affairs Committee, Barragan asked the children to testify. They were more than ready, with charts and a formal presentation. They emphasized that the first fossil remains of the stegosaurus were found near Morrison, Colorado. And they reminded the committee members that some Canon City, Colorado, high school students and their teacher had discovered and dug up the bones of the stegosaurus that now lived comfortably in the Denver Museum of Natural History. They told the committee about other official state fossils and argued that the stegosaurus could be used on Colorado maps to attract tourists.

Following the young lobbyists' presentation the Senate Affairs Committee unanimously passed the first draft of the bill. Step one in the legislative battle was history.

Knowing that this first hurdle was only one of many, the children continued their work. After recruiting the aid of students in other classes, they wrote more than 2,000 letters to other Colorado children, authors, museum directors, newspapers, radio stations and, of course, legislators.

The campaign intensified. The students had stegosaurus T-shirts printed—and trekked to the state capitol to present one to Governor Richard Lamm. They wore the T-shirts on field trips to the Denver Museum of Natural History and gave one to the museum director.

Soon the students began receiving responses to their mailings. Many people offered assistance—including the grandson of Karl Kessler (the teacher who had discovered the stegosaurus bones displayed in the Denver Museum).

The grandson—Jeff Finkle—donated to the class a collection of prehistoric fossils that Kessler had collected from a rare 150-million-year-old Colorado rock formation. Given this impetus, the students started assembling their own rock and fossil collection. As it grew, they began receiving invitations to put on exhibits throughout the state.

Though their campaign was now in full gear, the students decided to take no chances. They invited a professional lobbyist to the school to give them tips. Responding to her lessons, the children went to a local shopping mall and collected more than 1,000 signatures on a petition requesting that the stegosaurus be adopted as the state fossil.

To culminate their first year's labor the students staged a school play—*McElwain's Magic Egg*. "We stretched our imaginations a little and 'hatched' the first dinosaur egg in 65 million years," laughs Sawdo. Senator Barragan and State Representative Betty Orten were among the special guests in the audience.

Despite all the students' efforts, the legislative session ended before the bill passed. Senate Bill 270 was dead as a dinosaur. It was, however, put on the governor's list of priority items for the 1982 session. The children and Sawdo resolved to continue their crusade.

During the 1981-82 school year, the students—now fifth graders still guided by Sawdo and aided by her fourth grade class—made a diorama on Colorado mining days and placed a miniature Steggy in the exhibit. They produced a slide show. They also created and displayed Steggy-oriented works of art—clay models, water-color paintings, three-dimensional papier-mâché posters, batiks.

The reptile waddled through the entire curriculum: Sawdo even used dinosaurs in designing math story problems.

In order to present their case personally, the class hosted 10 state legislators in the school cafeteria and topped off the meal with Steggy-shaped cookies. They also presented each guest with a "dinosaur hunting license."

The widespread publicity that followed this January 1982 event set the stage for another active legislative campaign. Again the children testified.

But the students' efforts appeared to be in vain. They were disappointed a second time: the legislative session ended, and the Steggy bill was once more officially dead.

Then the surprise: Governor Lamm called and announced that he would proclaim the stegosaurus as the official state fossil at a special assembly at McElwain Elementary School.

On April 28, 1982, in a noisy room full of TV cameras and newspaper reporters, the governor read and signed his executive order to the cheers of 200 McElwain students.

Despite the governor's proclamation, the state fossil will not appear on official Colorado maps unless the legislature passes a law backing the governor's executive order. Having fought so hard, Sawdo's "dinosaur kids" aren't about to quit now. Their work continues. One of the children has designed a bumper sticker that shows a line drawing of Steggy with the words "Colorado State Fossil—Original Native."

The battle and the fun go on, as does the learning—about the lawmaking process, about democracy and adversity, about perseverance.

Margaret Malsam

(Top) Ruth Sawdo takes a look at her fourth graders' work in progress—artistic tributes to their beloved Steggy. (Bottom) Gov. Richard Lamm visits McElwain Elementary to issue proclamation declaring the stegosaurus dinosaur Colorado's official state fossil.

Margaret Malsam is a public relations specialist for Adams County School District 12 in Northglenn/Thornton, Colorado.

IN THE CLASSROOM

THINKING THE UNTHI... THOUGHTFULLY

NEA Members Help Design Imaginative New Teaching Unit On Conflict and Nuclear War

Nuclear war. Bob Dylan sang about it in the early sixties—"A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall"—and Peter, Paul, and Mary hinted at the danger as they climbed the pop music charts with their version of Pete Seeger's "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?"

They were ahead of their time, expressing fears that others suppressed, wailing counterculture lyrics. They were easily dismissed.

Today the voices that express those same fears—of apocalypse and waste, of a planet deadened and seared—are harder to tune out. Often they're our own voices, quiet and unsettling.

Nuclear war. It's a phrase packed with visions that shatter even the most stony facade, a phrase—as they might have said in an earlier time—that makes grown men cry. It makes our children cry, too.

The evidence has been growing for at least two decades. Our children are frightened, frightened by the world they've inherited or (if we'll own up to it) frightened by the world we've created for them. We've given them the present. They're not sure we've given them a future.

Child psychologist Sibylle Escalona, writing in the 1960's, found that awareness of the nuclear threat had a "corrosive and malignant effect" on adolescent development. Adolescents lived, she said, with "profound uncertainty." The question they asked themselves was not *what* they would become, but *if* they would become.

More recent research has uncovered similar gnawing anxieties among today's adolescents and pre-adolescents. Our children know of growing nuclear arsenals, of escalating international hostilities, of "the button." The knowledge is part of their days and nights and nightmares.

"We may be raising a generation without hope, without promise of a future, cynical about the adult world and helpless to change it," contend Harvard psychiatrists William R. Beardslee and John E. Mack. Their recent study, *The Impact of Nuclear Developments on Children and Adolescents*, shows how deeply our society underestimates the darkness that the shadow of nuclear war casts over young people's lives.

Other cultural analysts, among them Yale psychiatrist Robert J. Lifton, have reached the same conclusion. Lifton sees the allure of bizarre cults and mind-numbing drugs as a reflection of youth's mounting anxieties, their sense of futurelessness, and their desperate search for a sanctuary from paralyzing pain. The source of their pain, says Lifton, is the spectacle of a whole society "sitting back and doing nothing as we prepare to blow ourselves up."

What to do? Lifton says our battle to blot out bitter truth is a losing one. What our children know is not the problem. What they don't know but can only morbidly imagine may be. Helen Caldicott, mother of three and president of Physicians for Social Responsibility, makes the point succinctly: "To know is terrifying, but not to know may be fatal."

When the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) reached this same conclusion, the answer to the question—what to do?—became obvious. It was an old answer: education.

UCS, established in 1969, is a Boston-based national organization of scientists, engineers, and citizens. It has set as one of its primary goals a world free from the threat of nuclear war.

"We felt a responsibility," says Howard Ris, director of UCS's Nuclear Arms Program, "to help students better cope with their fears. Most textbooks ignore the problem—hardly benign neglect. We resolved to give teachers a resource they could use to introduce students not only to the subject of nuclear war, but more generally to the notion of conflict resolution through negotiation.

"But we needed help," Ris explains. "We lacked the pedagogical resources to complement our technical expertise. That's why we turned to the NEA and MTA [the Massachusetts Teachers Association]."

Adds Sharon Robinson, NEA's director of Instruction and Professional Development, "We welcomed UCS's request for assistance. It had been 15 years since Martin Luther King, Jr., had tried to reorient our priorities as a nation and as an international community. In a speech a year before his death, he said, 'Over the bleached bones and jumbled residue of numerous civilizations are written the words: *Too late* . . . We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation.' "

Concludes Robinson: "We agreed it was time to discuss that choice with students."

On "CBS Morning News," Dover, Del., teacher Bill Hutchinson argues that seventh graders deserve formal exposure to nuclear issues.

Within a year, the cooperation between UCS scientists and NEA teachers had been translated into *Choices: A Unit on Conflict and Nuclear War*, a 160-page study guide for junior high students. The excellence of the UCS guide is a tribute to the process that generated it—a process that placed responsibility for the unit in the hands of classroom teachers nationwide.

"There had to be an easier way," laughs NEA/IPD project coordinator Robert McClure, "but we decided to do it the right way. We put our trust where it belongs—with those who labor in our classrooms."

UCS, relying—as it would throughout the project—on the experience of NEA and MTA teachers, first chose a writing team. Four MTA members with a wide range of classroom experience (Dan French, Barbara Kinach, Connie Phillips, R. Bruce Ward), MTA/IPD staffer Jerry Spindel, and a UCS specialist in nuclear issues (Natalie Goldring) drafted the initial version of the study guide.

In October 1982 the team met in Detroit with the 47 NEA members from 34 states who would pilot test the teaching unit in their classrooms. The mood was celebratory. These were teachers familiar with student concerns and fears. Now at last they had a tool they could use to replace muddled ideas about nuclear war with precise facts—and so hopelessness with hope.

"This generation of students lives with a sense of helplessness," commented Barbara Ruben, a teacher at Fernwood Middle School in Portland, Oregon. "Last year, I asked my seventh and eighth graders to write about their heroes. Many had none. They explained that they were unable to think of *anyone* who could make a difference—make the world a safer place. I really think their attitude will change only when they see that *they* can make a difference. That's what this project is all about."

Vineland, N.J., teacher John Furgione says testing the UCS unit was one of the highlights of his career: "The kids were really grateful."

New Jersey social studies teacher John Furgione (Landis School, Vineland) touched on the same theme: "The subject of nuclear war is on students' minds. But too often we adults act as though it's a taboo topic. So we abandon the kids. That's unfair. It's irresponsible. If we really care about these kids, we've got to give them some guidance, let them ventilate their concerns, help them move forward to views they can articulate, defend, and some day translate into convictions they'll express at the voting booth."

Throughout a series of workshop sessions with the writing team, the teachers—regardless of their own political views—insisted upon emphasizing the first word of the study unit: *Choices*. Almost in unison, they agreed that the educational task was to prepare students to make choices—not to dictate those choices. They committed themselves to the position that the question of how to avert nuclear catastrophe—deterrence, arms reductions, a freeze—was a ques-

Order Your Copy Now

Choices: A Unit on Conflict and Nuclear War **(stock no. 1425-1-OD) is available for $9.95 from—**

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West Haven, CT 06516.

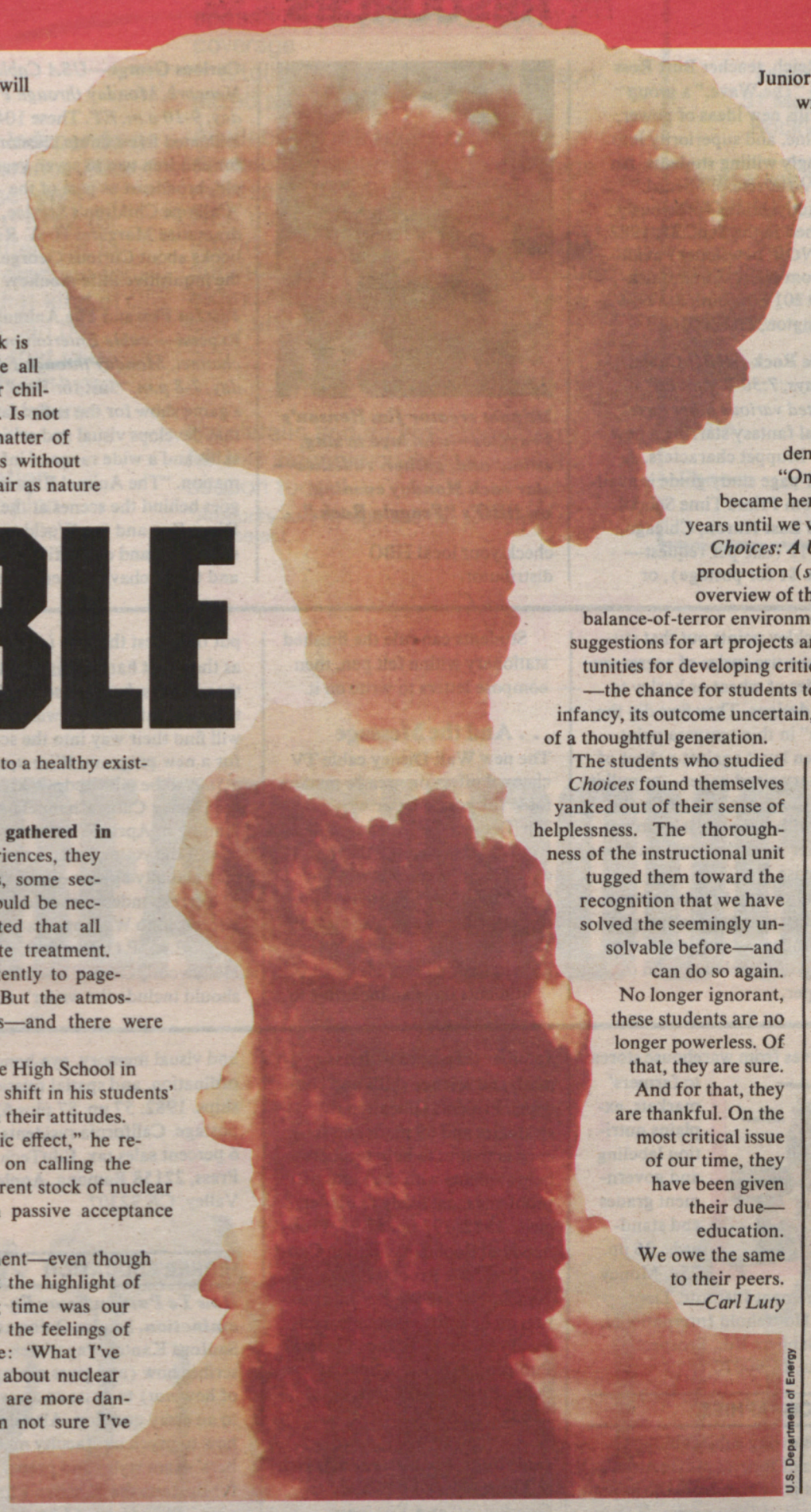
The 160-page instructional unit includes 40 worksheets designed for reproduction as student handouts.

tion on which men and women of goodwill could disagree.

They did not, however, forsake the ideal of peace. They wanted the study unit to reflect civil—and civilizing—ideals. Often they stated eloquently sentiments paralleling those that Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces John F. Kennedy had expressed in September 1963:

". . . . Our [humankind's] most basic link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal. . . . Is not peace, in the last analysis, basically a matter of human rights—the right to live our lives without fear of devastation—the right to breathe air as nature created it—the right of future generations to a healthy existence?"

NKABLE



U.S. Department of Energy

When, in December, the teachers gathered in Memphis to share their pilot-testing experiences, they were jubilant: the unit had worked. Yes, some sections had problems and some revision would be necessary. In particular, the teachers insisted that all points of view receive fair and adequate treatment. The writing team invited and listened intently to page-by-page criticisms of their initial draft. But the atmosphere remained amiable. Success stories—and there were many—cushioned all criticisms.

Don Ernst, a history teacher at Southside High School in Fort Smith, Arkansas, had watched a real shift in his students' views and—perhaps more importantly—in their attitudes.

"I knew the unit was having a dramatic effect," he reported, "when several students insisted on calling the Pentagon to verify information on our current stock of nuclear weapons. They were moving away from passive acceptance toward activism and self-reliance.

"Surprisingly," Ernst added, "that moment—even though it's the kind that teachers relish—was not the highlight of the course. For me, the most satisfying time was our wrap-up session. One student summed up the feelings of the class better than I ever could have: 'What I've learned is that those who are uninformed about nuclear issues and unconcerned about the debate are more dangerous than the weapons themselves.' I'm not sure I've ever had a prouder moment as a teacher."

Ernst's experience was not atypical. Nancy Lorenz's students at Adams Junior High School in North Platte, Nebraska, wrote letters to the new Soviet leader Yuri Andropov, pleading with him to think about the world he would like to see his children and grandchildren grow up in. They also collaborated on a letter to President Reagan, asking only that he remember their desire for peace.

Lorenz also noted that the unit on conflict and nuclear war carried a special bonus: her students' social studies habits improved dramatically. They read newspapers more frequently, watched the nightly TV news, and often glued themselves to the set during presidential news conferences.

"Only four more years." That, says Lorenz, became her students' motto: "Only four more years until we vote."

Choices: A Unit on Conflict and Nuclear War is now in production (*see box, page 10*). It provides a historical overview of the developments that have generated the balance-of-terror environment. It includes scientific and economic data, suggestions for art projects and writing exercises, numerous opportunities for developing critical thinking skills. And it presents *choices*—the chance for students to see that the nuclear debate is still in its infancy, its outcome uncertain, its resolution awaiting the thoughtfulness of a thoughtful generation.

The students who studied *Choices* found themselves yanked out of their sense of helplessness. The thoroughness of the instructional unit tugged them toward the recognition that we have solved the seemingly unsolvable before—and can do so again. No longer ignorant, these students are no longer powerless. Of that, they are sure. And for that, they are thankful. On the most critical issue of our time, they have been given their due—education. We owe the same to their peers.

—Carl Luty

Resources

Citizens Against Nuclear War (CAN), 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Coalition of national organizations committed to preventing nuclear war.

Consortium on Peace Research Education and Development (COPRED), 1140 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Offers curriculum materials.

Educators for Social Responsibility, 639 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139. Offers a bibliography, pilot curriculum, other materials.

Ground Zero, 806 15th St., N.W., Suite 421, Washington, DC 20005. Offers curriculum guide and audiovisual materials on nuclear war.

Student-Teacher Organization To Prevent Nuclear War, Box 232, Northfield, MA 01360. Publishes a newsletter and offers materials for secondary teachers.

Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), 1384 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02238. Initiates major media programs and conferences on the arms race and the effects of nuclear weapons.

Zahm-Hurwitz Productions, 43 W. 93rd St., New York, NY 10025. Offers *Bombs Will Make the Rainbow Break,* a 17-minute film featuring children's thoughts and feelings about growing up in a nuclear era (recommended by NEA for professionally guided viewing).

Not for Social Studies Only

Wilhelmina Anderson has a new problem: the number of students in her mathematics club is increasing too rapidly. The source of the problem? Her decision to use *Choices: A Unit on Conflict and Nuclear War,* laden as it is with math problems, as the basis for math club activities.

Anderson, an eighth grade teacher at Bartlett Middle School in Savannah, Georgia, now has a record-high 26 members in the club. And student requests to join are mounting daily.

"Since I like to keep the club projects as individualized as possible, I'm having to tell students they can't join," says Anderson. "I guess that's the strongest signal I've seen of just how interested students are in nuclear issues."

Anderson may solve her pleasant problem and give more students access to *Choices* by trying a new approach—a team-taught multidisciplinary course that would include math, science, social studies, and English.

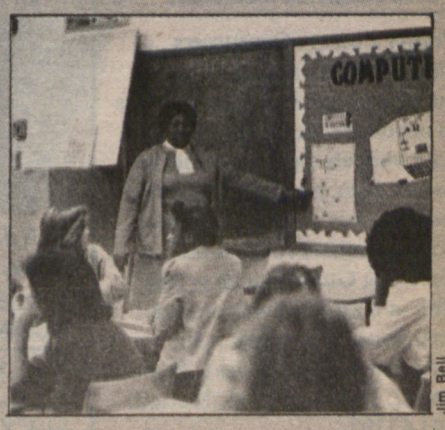
"That would be hard to work out," she sighs, "but it would be worth a try. This teaching unit may emphasize critical thinking, but it's anything but soft on the basics."

Anderson's colleagues who have pilot-tested the *Choices* unit agree. Barbara Ruben of Fernwood Middle School in Portland, Oregon, tells of an 11-year-old student who worked on his writing skills with singular enthusiasm "in part because he wanted to send a message to the Soviet government." His completed letter has perhaps by now reached the Kremlin:

Dear Sir:

Do you think there is really going to be a nuclear war? The kids in our school don't want one. That's why I'm writing you. . . . I don't want to die yet. Do you?

Yours truly,
T. J. Bolton



Jim Bell

Savannah's Wilhelmina Anderson uses activities in the UCS teaching unit to spark interest in mathematics. Result? A crowded math club.

RESOURCES

TV Tips

NEA recommends the following broadcasts to members, students, and their families in the weeks ahead:

Drake's Venture—*PBS, Sunday, March 27, 9-11 p.m. ET.* Masterpiece Theatre special dramatizing Francis Drake's first voyage through the Straits of Magellan and his search for the Northwest Passage. Caution: there's a violent beheading scene; discretion advised.

The Wave—*ABC, Wednesday, March 30, 4-5 p.m. ET (repeat).* To teach a lesson about the Nazi Reich, teacher Burt Ross sets up "The Wave," a group that drills new ideas of power, discipline, and superiority into startlingly willing students. An ABC "Afterschool Special." Free study guides (previously published in the Sept. 21, 1982, *NEA NOW* newsletter) available from NEA Communications, 1201 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Fraggle Rock—*HBO Cable, Mondays, 7:30-8 p.m. ET (repeated various other days).* Musical fantasy starring a new cast of Muppet characters. A free 12-page study guide is available from Prime Time School TV, 40 East Huron, Chicago, IL 60611 (one per request—include $1 for postage), or check your local HBO distributor.

Muppet creator Jim Henson's Fraggles—who love to sing, swim, and gather radishes—star each Monday evening on HBO's "Fraggle Rock."

Curious George—*USA Cable Network, Monday through Friday, 9-10 a.m. ET.* These 104 animated five-minute telestories for children two to seven years old, broadcast as part of the "Calliope Children's Service," dramatize Margaret H. A. Rey's books about Curious George, the inquisitive little monkey.

Just for Fun and **The Animal Express**— *cable Entertainment channel, Monday through Friday, 7-8 p.m.* "Just for Fun" is a game show for the entire family that develops visual and critical skills and a wide range of information. "The Animal Express" goes behind the scenes at the San Diego Zoo and Sea World to show wild and domestic animals and their behavior in environments designed to resemble their natural homes.

Lorne Greene's New Wilderness—*syndicated; check local listings for stations, dates, and times.* Half-hour weekly series showing dramatic situations in the lives of wilderness animals and the people who care for them.

Portrait of America—*WTBS; check cable listings for dates and times.* An ambitious five-year project by Turner Broadcasting; one-hour specials every month will focus on each of our nation's states and territories. NEA state-level affiliates are helping to develop the programs. March: Georgia; April: Puerto Rico.

Idea Exchange

Letter Writing: The Medium . . .

Designing their own stationery can spark children's interest in learning to write letters, suggests M. Elissa Brockley, author of *Arts and Crafts Lessons Anyone Can Teach* (West Nyack, N.Y.: Parker Publishing Co., 1982).

Brockley points out that students can use sprigs of evergreen or blades of wheat or barley to create designs. They first dip the "brush" in thin tempera paint and then lay it against a sheet of stationery-sized paper—or pull it across the paper, or spatter the paper with it, or use it in any of the other ways their imaginations will devise.

Another way to decorate the stationery is to put the sprig or blade under the paper and rub the side of a peeled crayon over the paper.

Students can rule the finished stationery with a felt pen, then compose letters to write on it.

. . . And the Message

The new Walt Disney cable TV channel offers one ready-made topic for young letter writers. The Disney people want to hear from children aged 7 through 12 about their "dearest wish" for themselves: perhaps to create something, go someplace, meet someone, learn something, see how something is made.

Students have an incentive to put their best thought (as well as their best handwriting) into these letters, because some of the more interesting "wishes" will find their way into the script for a new program, *Wish upon a Star,* to be televised weekly on the Disney Cable Channel beginning in April. What's more, a few of the young letter writers may actually appear on the show.

Correspondence should be addressed to Wish upon a Star, Dept. E.A., P.O. Box 950, Hollywood, CA 90028 and should include the writer's name, age, address, phone number, teacher's name, and school.

Each letter should tell why the student has this "dearest wish," how long he or she has had it, and how it would be if the wish were granted.

If you're using a classroom activity that you think other NEA members might like to know about, please send a description to Idea Exchange, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Free or Inexpensive

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Industry-Education-Labor Collaboration: An Action Guide for Collaborative Councils. National Institute for Work and Learning. Paperback. A how-to-do-it manual—one of several products of a research project designed to document local programs for preparing young people for the world of work. 1981. 100 pp. $5. National Institute for Work and Learning, 1302 18th St., N.W., #501, Washington, DC 20036.

CONSUMER EDUCATION

Penny Power. Consumers Union. Magazine (a sort of junior *Consumer Reports*). Aims to introduce the world of household budgets and economics to fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. A five-member advisory board of NEA members reviews the Teaching Guide, which is free with at least 10 classroom subscriptions. Each student subscription, $6 (six issues). Penny Power, P.O. Box 1906, Marion, OH 43302.

Your Food Dollar. Booklet. Tells how to set up a food spending plan, compares shopping alternatives from warehouse stores

to farmers' markets, explains nutrition labeling and government grades and standards. 36 pp. 75¢. Money Management Institute, Dept. NEA, Household International, 2700 Sanders Rd., Prospect Heights, IL 60070.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

The following subject bibliographies of federal publications are available free from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Civil War, SB-192
Drug Education, SB-163
Elementary Education, SB-196
Environmental Education and Protection, SB-088
Foreign Area Studies, SB-166
Foreign Languages, SB-082
NASA Educational Publications, SB-222

SCIENCE

How To Encourage Girls in Math and Science. Joan Skolnick, Carol Langbort, and Lucille Day. Prentice-Hall/Spectrum. Paperback. Shows how a variety of sociological pressures work together to make girls less familiar than boys with basic math and science skills and concepts. Presents educational strategies and 69 math and science activities to help teachers help students with the kinds of problems most likely to hinder girls. 1982. 192 pp. $7.95. Prentice-Hall Book Distribution Center, Rte. 59 & Brook Hill Dr., W. Nyack, NY 10994. For information on quantity discounts, contact Prentice-Hall, Inc., General Publishing Division, Special Sales, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632.

Ladybugs and Lettuce Leaves: A Young Person's Guide to Gardening and Environmental Science. Project Outside/Inside, Somerville, Massachusetts, Public Schools. Large-format paperback. Presents school-tested activities designed to teach children how to plan a garden, control insects, and eventually enjoy a nutritious harvest. 1982. 84 pp. $6.95; teacher's guide, $8. Bulk rates are available. Center for Science in the Public Interest, Dept. DD, 1755 S St., N.W., Washington, DC 20009.

ART

Kinderart Drawing. Marjorie F. Crawford. Spiral-bound booklet. A manual by an experienced kindergarten teacher for teaching drawing to K-2 students. Emphasizes training in auditory and visual memory, eye-hand coordination, and spatial relationships. 1982. 57 pp. $7 plus 63¢ postage. California residents add 6 percent sales tax. EduTech Press, 22158 Ramona, Apple Valley, CA 92307.

HIGHER EDUCATION

How To Pass an Essay Examination. Sandra Quinn and Sanford Kanter. Paperback. Describes how (and gives examples of how *not*) to write an answer to an essay question. Also shows how to psych out faculty members' exam styles and prepare for the tests they are likely to give. 1982. 41 pp. $3.95. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 200 Iowa St., Dubuque, IA 52001.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Easy-To-Make Aids for Your Handicapped Child: A Guide for Parents and Teachers.

Don Caston. Prentice-Hall/Spectrum. Paperback. A how-to-do-it manual for constructing "simple, cheap, and pleasurable" equipment for handicapped children. Contains photos, drawings, and directions for making such devices as toy hangers, walking trainers, and floor tables. 1982. 160 pp. $6.95. Prentice-Hall Book Distribution Center, Rte. 50 & Brook Hill Dr., W. Nyack, NY 10994. For information on quantity discounts, contact Prentice-Hall, Inc., General Publishing Division, Special Sales, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632.

GUIDANCE

Don't Miss Out: The Ambitious Student's Guide to Scholarships and Loans. Seventh edition, 1982-84. Robert Leider. Booklet. Tells prospective undergraduates and their parents what they should know about financial aid, including federal and state grants and loans and private scholarships. 1982. 60 pp. $2.50 plus 50¢ postage. Octameron Associates, P.O. Box 3437, Alexandria, VA 22302.

ELEMENTARY

Listening Skills Schoolwide: Activities and Programs. Thomas G. Devine. Booklet published jointly by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. For in-service and individual use. Gives methods for teaching children in all subjects how to learn through listening. 1982. 61 pp. $6.50; NCTE members, $5.25. Stock No. 19560. NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801.

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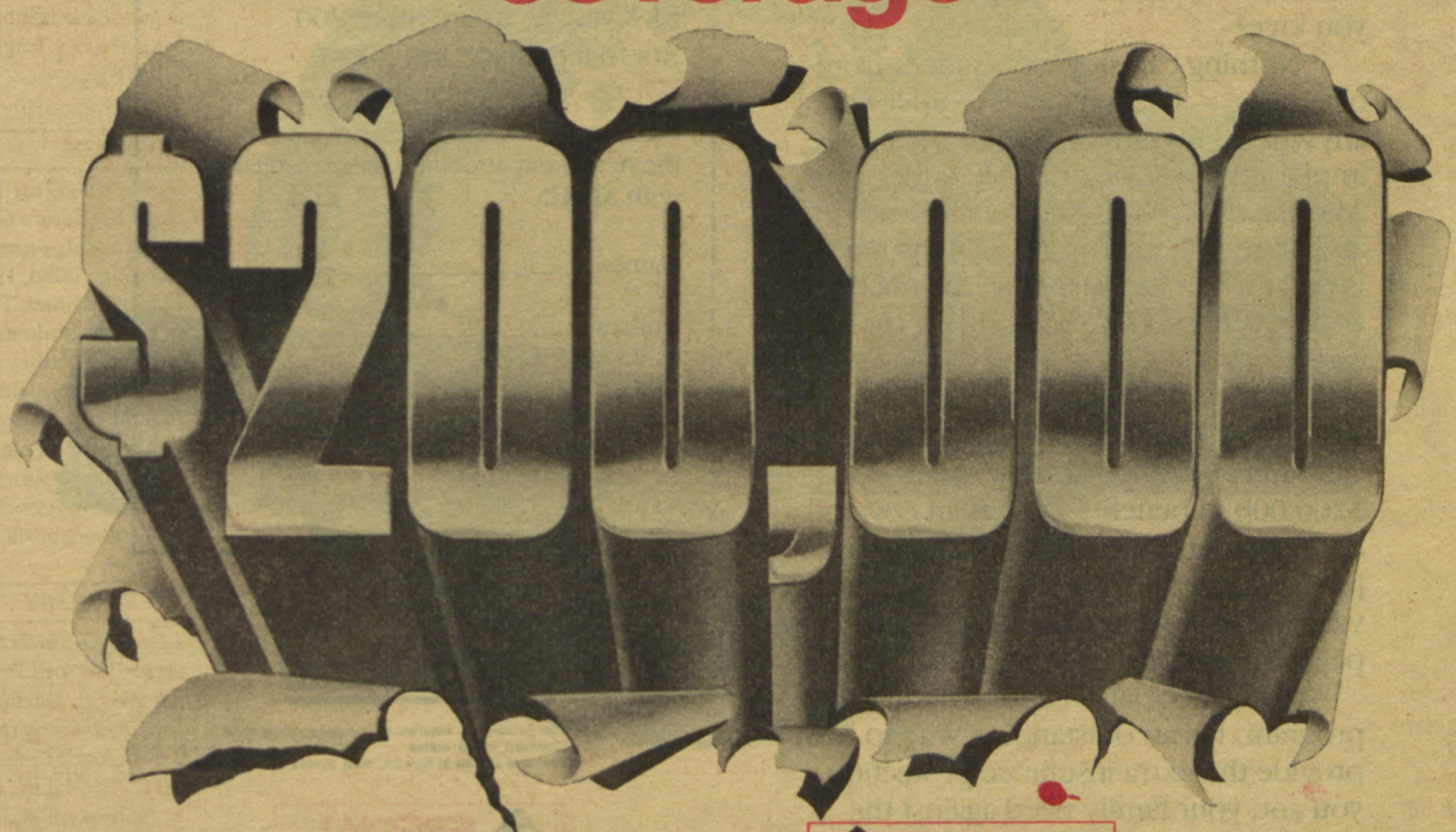

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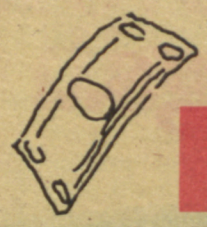

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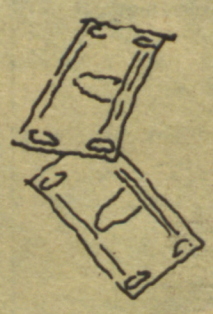

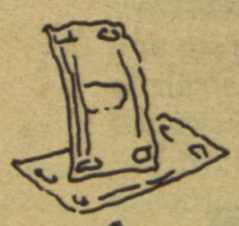

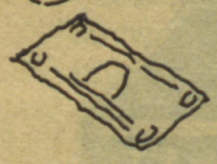

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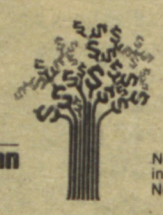

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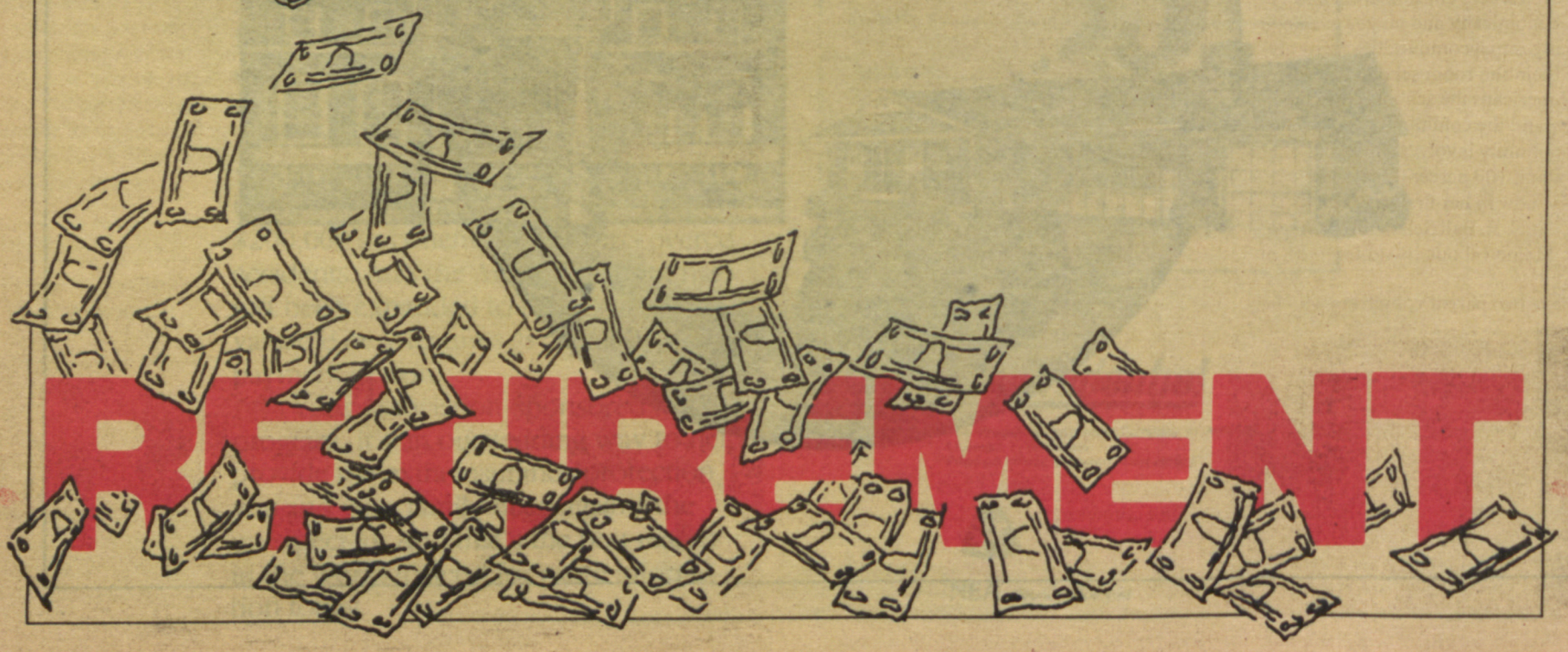


RURAL EDUCATION

Still Going Strong

America's One-Room Schools

"You would have to bomb this place to get me out," says Laura Heezen.

"I'm staying as long as they'll have me," says Liz Lindsay. "It's a dream come true."

"I wouldn't trade my position here for anything," comments Anna King.

Those are the sentiments of three rural NEA members who are teaching today's students in an environment that is very much a part of American folklore—the one-room schoolhouse.

Though their numbers are dropping, the National Center for Education Statistics reports nearly 900 one-teacher schools in the U.S. as of 1980, the latest year for which a count is available.

Scott Perry

Consolidation has taken its toll on one-room schools. Most districts have long since decided that it doesn't make much sense to keep several scattered buildings running, each for a handful of students.

But even where consolidation makes sense economically and maybe even educationally, small communities resist giving up their one-room school. For many rural Americans the school is the community, and the community is the school.

"Community involvement in our school is just about 100 percent," says Liz Lindsay, now in her first year as a K-2 teacher at C. E. Ball School in West Forks, Maine (about 160 miles north of Portland).

"I have two parent volunteers who help the children one morning a week with games and skill review," Lindsay adds. "A board member comes once a week to play the guitar and sing folk songs. Parents are often invited in for lunch or cookouts or movies."

Images Unlimited

With just six pupils, Anna King has time to give individual attention at Plain View School in Winner, South Dakota.

Every once in a while, the school board meets to talk about closing C. E. Ball and the other one-room school located along Maine's Kennebec River.

"Old and young come out to support keeping the schools open," says Lindsay. "The school has come to symbolize the life of the town."

Things aren't that much different in Vernita, Washington, where Laura Heezen is in her second year as a K-6 teacher.

Many of the residents of Vernita's 19 homes work as electricians for the Bonneville Power Administration. The village is located midway between the Grand Coulee and Bonneville Dams, which supply electricity for much of the Northwest.

Heezen often turns classroom projects into community events. Last year, for instance, she assigned her students to develop a community library—as a social studies project. The students wrote and passed out questionnaires, made posters, set up community meetings, and saved aluminum cans to raise money to buy books.

"You can't teach here without getting to know everyone," says Heezen. "Fortunately I get along with them all."

Anna King teaches at Plain View School in Winner, South Dakota (midway between Rapid City and Sioux Falls). A rural teacher for most of her 30-year teaching career, King says teachers in rural schools get much closer to parents. "I see them every morning and every evening," she explains. "They are much more supportive of teachers than in the city."

The tiny schools and the mix of grade levels mean lots and lots of individual attention.

Laura Heezen has just five students—one each in the second, third, and sixth grades, and two in the fourth.

Anna King has six students in grades 1, 2, 4, and 5. The largest class belongs to Liz Lindsay—12 students from kindergarten through second grade.

Lindsay formerly taught in larger school districts in Maine, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. "I would feel so drained and tired at the end of the day—just numb," she recalls.

"Here, I know where each student is academically and what needs to be taught. And I don't get lonely without an adult to talk to. Students are people too—they're marvelous company."

John Cahill

Tracy, Elisabeth, LaDonna, and Terrell gather around teacher Laura Heezen in Vernita, Washington.

There are drawbacks to one-room schools, points out Laura Heezen.

"The biggest thing is the adjustment students must make when they first come from a large school to a one-room school or vice versa. It's difficult for them to fit in socially," she says.

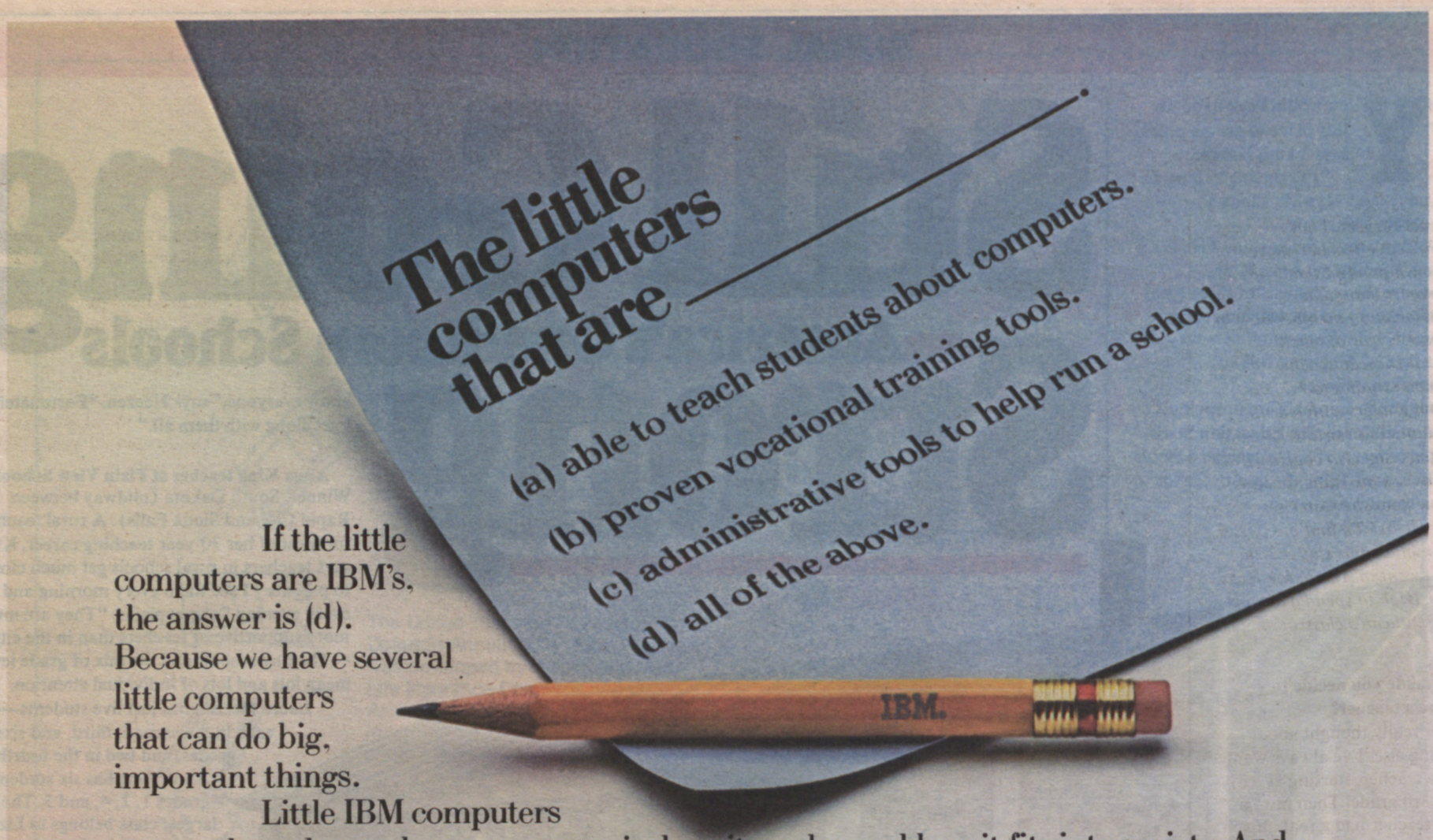
Still, all three teachers believe the one-room school has its place.

"Last year I was beginning to wonder if I would stay in teaching," recalls Liz Lindsay. "I wanted a lifetime career, and I wasn't sure teaching was the answer. Now, in this school, I have it. I love teaching these kids."

—Bill Fischer

Scott Perry

West Forks, Maine, teacher Liz Lindsay and aide Judy Bates begin "story time" for their 12 students.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Meet:

Carol Duncan

Nancy Harris

Personal respect. That's the key to productive teacher-student relationships. And that's the philosophy that guides a 24-year-old Association member now in her fourth year of teaching.

Carol Duncan teaches science and social studies to 7th, 8th, and 9th graders with learning disabilities in Charlotte, North Carolina. She also coaches track and advises the student council.

How does she foster respect in her students? To find out, NEA Communications staffer Nancy Harris went to Albemarle Road Junior High to spend a day in Carol Duncan's classroom.

Once a Rebel, Now a Teacher

What made you decide to become a teacher?
I never really thought about anything else. I've always wanted to be a teacher, starting as early as the 3rd grade. Then my 7th grade teacher had a real impact on me. I was going through a real rebellious stage. I was quick, mature for my age. I thought teachers were stupid, and I was just hell in their classes.

But this 7th grade teacher really challenged me. She picked up on the fact I was bored, so she'd give me projects to do on my own. She gave me a lot of freedom to work on projects independently.

Did you realize then what an effect this teacher was having?
I knew then. I didn't care about other teachers and I didn't think they cared about me. But she did.

I think about the kids I have now and wonder, "Do I affect them like she affected me?" For long-term gratification, you have to think that you've influenced them. You have to be optimistic.

What was the biggest shock in going from college student to teacher?
The fact that I wasn't prepared. I was teaching science but I had no background. I'd learned how to teach math and reading, but I'd had no science curriculum in college. Yet I was out there and the kids were asking me questions I couldn't answer. That was scary.

Do all the kids in your classes really need to be in special education?
No. When I worked at Carmel [Road Junior High] I was involved in a program on mainstreaming. A lot of LD [learning-disabled] students really can work in regular classes if they just have one hour a day in a resource room and someone to support them. One year we mainstreamed 18 kids who came to me one period a day.

Do your students understand the label "learning disabled"?
My kids often say to me, "We like being in this class because we're slow. This class works slow." So I have to say, "Sit down, everybody. I want you to understand something. To be in my class you have to have average or above average intelligence. Do you hear me?" Then I explain, "There's something that has happened—there's a process in your brain. We don't really know what it is that keeps you from learning everything that you have potential to learn. And that's why you are in here." I try to get that across to them. Nobody has ever really explained it to them before.

Do you think your kids have a positive image of themselves?
It's hard to say. When the kids are in my room I feel they do because I really work on that. I want all the kids to have a positive self-image. I think that's probably my biggest goal for my students. It's not so much teaching them what happened in 1776 or anything like that. I want them to come to school, feel good about themselves, and feel they are achieving in school. For far too many LD students, school is a negative experience.

If you could offer a piece of advice to "regular" teachers in terms of how to deal with LD kids, what would it be?
I would try to make them understand that LD children are *not lazy*. They really want to achieve. Of course you're always going to have children who don't try.

But you have to be especially patient with LD children. You can give directions, but you might need to go over with the LD kids and say, "Do you understand? Let me go over this with you one more time." It takes a lot of one-on-one eye contact and "this-is-what-we're-doing" kind of thing for that LD child in your room.

How do you deal with students who you feel you're just not getting through to?
If I can't get through to a student, I consider it *my* failure. So I'll start making a concerted effort to help the child. I'll stand beside that child all period . . . like this one student I've had for two years. I stand beside his desk and do each thing *with* him. If somebody else needs some help, I say "OK, I'll be there in just a minute." Or I ask another student to see what the person needs. I call on students I know can help other students. And I keep my place right there beside the "problem" child.

Are most of the parents concerned about their kids?
Yes. They want to know what they can do to help, what they can do at home. The problem is that they're unaware of their children's rights. I'd say less than 3 percent of the parents know anything about student rights. Generally if the teachers aren't pushing for those rights, the parents won't either. I wish I could do some kind of parent training.

Nancy Harris

What would you like to teach them?
I'd like to explain to them exactly what the exceptional program is all about. They are so unaware. They don't even know what terms like *IEP* or *LD* mean. They don't know where their child should be placed. If their child is slow, they think he or she is dumb or retarded.

Are you a good teacher?
Students have told me, "You're my favorite teacher." That makes me feel real good. But most important is seeing how much the students I had last year have improved. It was like pulling teeth to get them to keep a science notebook, for example. But I was determined. They had to write up every experiment, turn it in, and I'd grade it. This year I didn't have to remind them. They already had their notebooks; they knew how to do the experiments and the write-ups.

Being able to control students that maybe other teachers can't also makes me feel successful. Having that rapport with students who give other teachers trouble makes me feel like there's something there . . . you know, I'm doing something right.

Tell me a success story about one of your students.
A success story? It has to be William Allen. Anybody who knows William would say that. You talk about a child who would rub everybody the wrong way, that was William. I looked at him and I could see myself sitting there in 7th grade—challenging every teacher who crossed my path. William was like that too.

A bit of déja vu?
Yeah, and that helped our relationship. I had William in math and science class and we got to be good buddies. He would try me, sometimes he would try me to the limit. But I wouldn't lose patience. I'd say, "Look at what you're doing, William, you're driving me crazy." Then he'd say OK, and laugh.

I took William into my resource class at Carmel as an assistant. And I "used" him. Everything that I could possibly give William to do—I did. I made him feel like he was my right-hand man, that I could not do it without him. He would put papers together, go on errands, and do other things.

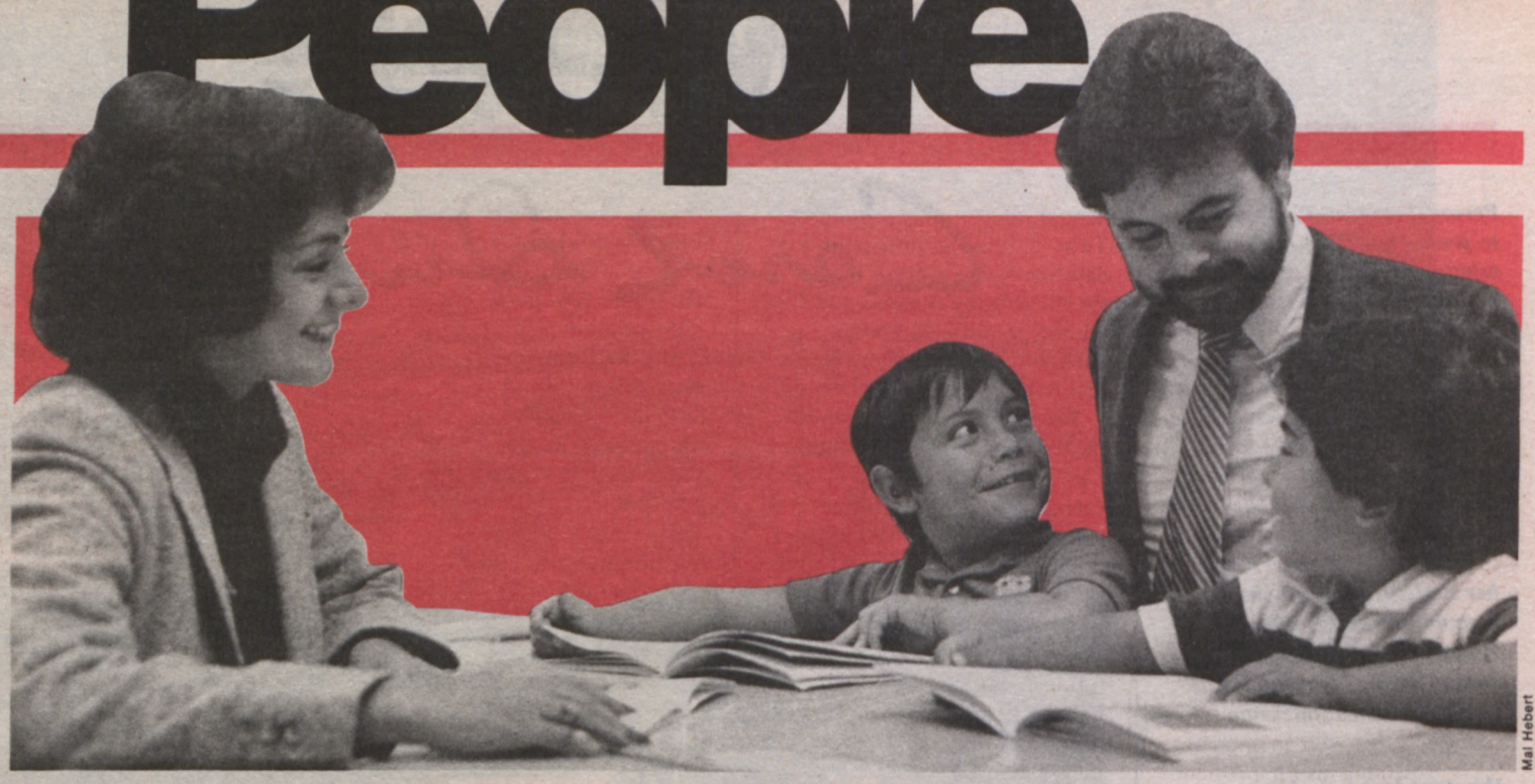
Sometimes he would get in trouble while he was on an errand and I'd have to go get him out of it. We'd deal with that, and I'd say, "OK, let's sit down and do your math." I was trying to help him keep up in his regular math class.

What was the upshot? You said you succeeded. How?
Well, one day he got in trouble. I didn't know he was in trouble when I came down to my room. But there was a note on my desk that said, "Dear Miss Duncan, I am in trouble and have to go home. I will do my homework for you and for me. Love, William."

No other teacher could believe he had any feelings. But he did. He cared about me. He wanted me to know he had gotten into trouble but that he was going to do his work while he was home. . . . I felt I had reached somebody that nobody else could reach.

What was the key?
Making him feel like a person. Putting him on my level. He wanted to be treated like somebody. He longed for attention. He wanted attention so much he would do anything to get it. And just giving him attention for positive things, having him do things, run errands—making him feel important—that was the key. I could feel the impact I made. He never told me, but I could feel it.

People



Mal Hebert

Television can be a powerful teaching tool. Two San Jose, California, members—**Katy Barreras** and **Alex Gallard**—recently helped put the medium to work educating the public on the good things happening in the schools.

Their ideas grew out of discussions among members of the Santa Clara County CTA/NEA Public Relations Pod.

To tell the schools' story, Gallard, a high school teacher, enlisted the support of Bay Area TV reporter Isabelle Duron, who sold her station on doing a four-part series originating from four San Jose area schools.

Duron spent at least an hour in each school teaching students. The conclusions she reported: teaching requires great patience and dedication, teachers are underpaid, and the public and school administrators should give teachers more support.

An hour-long special over an Oakland station, with the specific goal of reaching Spanish-speaking viewers, featured Gallard and Barreras—an elementary bilingual education teacher—answering questions and discussing bilingual education with students and their parents—in Spanish.

"These efforts have helped get a positive image of public schools across to the community," says Gallard. "The Spanish-speaking project and others have been particularly useful in breaking down the language barriers between parents and teachers."

Al Benn, *The Montgomery Advertiser*

If all else fails, call the governor.

When school opened last fall, Alabama Education Association board of directors member **Hank James** was faced with 45 students and 30 desks in his science classroom at Pine Hill Middle School in Wilcox County. Fifteen students sat in metal chairs.

"The kids had to brace themselves to keep from falling off," James says. "Some had to sit on the floor during combined class periods."

James made attempts to get money for desks from local sources, but to no avail. The county superintendent did send 15 desks to the school—desks James describes as "looking older than I do."

James explained his dilemma to AEA staff, who in turn contacted the governor. Within a few days, James received a check for $1,200 from the governor's office for new desks.

"I feel now the door has been opened for our newly elected school board to be more sympathetic to school needs," James says.

Cheyenne Teachers Education Association member **Harriett Elizabeth (Liz) Byrd** got very upset a few years ago when the Wyoming legislature decided not to boost the severance tax on minerals—a boost that would have meant higher teacher pay.

"If you're so upset," her father suggested, "why not run yourself?" She did—and was elected in 1980. Byrd helped pass a severance tax increase that hiked teacher salaries and paid for a variety of public services.

Last November, voters returned this second grade teacher to the state capitol for two more years.

Now Byrd's set her sights on passing a state equal employment opportunity law aimed at providing better job opportunities and pay incentives to attract more women into education. "With the weakening of Title IX in Washington, it's important that we have a strong law here in Wyoming," she explains.

Among Byrd's other goals are amending the state's Child Protection Act to include children up to age 19 and protecting Laramie County farmlands from soil erosion.

Byrd is the state legislature's first and only Black member.

The 45,000 townspeople of Bismarck, North Dakota, talked for more than a week about *Little Casino*, a play written by Association member **Ev Miller** and performed recently at the city auditorium with Bismarck educators serving as actors, directors, ticket sellers, and stagehands.

Little Casino traces Bismarck's history from 1873 to 1876—from the Black Hills gold rush to the return of the "Far West," the steamboat that brought back the wounded after the Battle of Little Big Horn.

"The only time citizens see educators as a group is at negotiations," Miller explains. "We wanted to do something to show we care about our city and its history."

When the proceeds from the play were counted, Bismarck's education community had some $10,000 to contribute to the United Way.

Linda Harsche

Fourth grade teacher Antonia Flitcraft became a cause celebre in southern New Jersey when she was arrested for "false swearing."

Flitcraft chaired the Millville Teachers Association's drive to get a question on the November 1982 ballot: Should Millville change from an appointed to an elected school board? As part of this task, she swore that, to the best of her knowledge, signatures on Association petitions were those of registered voters.

When some of the signatures were disqualified, Flitcraft was arrested—in what she believes was a "politically motivated" move against teachers.

She was fingerprinted, arraigned, and immediately released.

"I don't know what I would have done without (UniServ Representative) Frank Morrissey," she says. "I'm glad I had the New Jersey Education Association and NEA behind me. If I were just an average citizen, I would have had to hire my own attorney."

Ron Williams, *NJEA Reporter*

Public outrage galvanized the community and the press in support of Flitcraft. All charges against her have since been dismissed.

Social studies teacher Theodore Stevenson, backed by the South Carolina Education Association and NEA, has won an important case protecting his First Amendment right to free speech.

In November 1981, Stevenson attended a school board meeting where the superintendent spoke harshly to the Terrell Bay High School student body president. To avert class disruption the next day, Stevenson acted as mediator between the students and the administration—but refused to back the superintendent's claim that he had done nothing wrong.

The superintendent accused the teacher of causing disruption. Last May, Stevenson—a 17-year veteran of secondary school teaching—was transferred to an elementary school.

But a Marion County circuit judge has now ruled that Stevenson's transfer was an unconstitutional retaliation for voicing his opinion—and has ordered him transferred back to his former teaching position.

Comments SCEA President Joseph Vaughn, "This ruling reaffirms the right of all South Carolina teachers to express their views openly."

"There are enough educators in [Linda Eller's] family to staff a school," as the national weekly newspaper *Grit* put it.

Association member Eller teaches biology at West Wilkes (North Carolina) High School. Her husband Reggie is an elementary school principal.

Eighteen of Linda's relatives and five of Reggie's now work in education, or did—most as teachers, but others as school dieticians or speech pathologists. One sits on a school board while another former teacher still works with youth—as a probation officer.

Linda's son is already a reader at age two. "I would never force him," his mother says, "but I hope he does become a teacher—it's a meaningful vocation."

Robert Brown

Virginia's Vickie and Larry Roberson are a true Association couple. She's president of the Colonial Beach Education Association; he's vice-president.

They married last summer, three days after winning an uphill salary fight with the city council. "We'd been dating for a long time," Larry explains, "and the salary crisis just made us work together more closely."

Having two Association activists in the house makes things easier in some ways, Vickie points out. "It helps that he understands why I have to attend so many meetings!"

Community college instructor Patrick Clarke gives everything his best shot—whether he's fighting for his job or leading a photographers' safari in East Africa.

The British-born Clarke is back at work teaching photography, French, and East African culture at Clinton Community College in Plattsburgh, thanks to the New York Educators Association. By proving that the administration failed to follow contract procedures in attempting to "retrench" (lay off) Clarke in 1981, NYEA won his grievance.

"Education employees need a strong union behind them in cases like mine," says Clarke, who was reinstated last spring with $18,000 in back pay.

Patrick Clarke

Clarke spends his summers as a safari guide in Kenya, where he helps tourists capture giraffes, elephants, lions, leopards, rhinos, cape buffalos, antelopes, gazelles, zebras, and wildebeests—on film.

Four years ago when Oregon City (Oregon) first grade teacher **Elaine Krause** began volunteering at a local rape crisis center, she expected to be helping teenagers victimized by strangers.

What she found were often very young children assaulted by someone they knew.

Aided by grants from her local and state Associations, Krause developed two filmstrips to help preschool through sixth grade children escape sexual abuse.

Krause notes that one in four girls and one in ten boys will experience sexual abuse.

"A child's best defenses," she says, "are a sense of his or her own power, a knowledge of what constitutes abuse, and an awareness of the resources available for support and protection."

Whenever Merced, California, first grade teacher **Mary Fran Rowe** needs another classroom aid, she looks no further than her husband **Jack**—a fourth through sixth grade teacher who also happens to make toys that are perfect for primary instruction.

Jack says his hobby came about because he was bored four years ago.

His first project—large capital and lower case letters cut from masonite sheets—was an instant hit in Mary Fran's classroom.

"Adults don't realize that for a young child, the alphabet's really 52 letters, because capital and lower case letters look so different," Mary Fran explains. "Jack's letters are great for kindergartners and first graders."

Jack also turns out jigsaw puzzles, often composed of colorful animal characters finished the same on both sides.

"I exhibit at one or two craft shows a year," Jack says, "but teachers are constantly passing on my projects to each other, so there's enough demand to just about fill up all my spare time."

CTA Action

When Pattonville (Missouri) High School social studies classes study Wendell Willkie's 1940 challenge to Franklin D. Roosevelt's third term, it seems almost like a current event, thanks to teacher **Warren Lee,** who shows up wearing Willkie's "No Third Term" button.

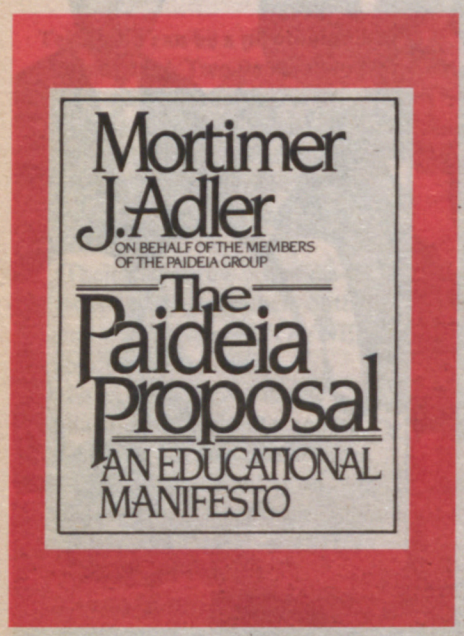
Lee, a former Missouri-NEA Teacher of the Year, has a collection of more than 4,000 political campaign items, dating back to Andrew Jackson's 1824 "Hero of New Orleans" token.

"When we're studying a particular election in my History of Presidential Elections class, I have actual memorabilia from the period available," Lee says.

His collection also includes banners and buttons on prohibition and women's suffrage.

BOOK BEAT

One Curriculum, Indivisible . . .



The Paideia Proposal: An Educational Manifesto by **Mortimer J. Adler.** Macmillan. 84 pp. $6.95; paperback, $2.95.

In *The Paideia Proposal,* philosopher and "Great Ideas" proponent Mortimer J. Adler writes on behalf of the members of the Paideia Group to suggest major changes in public education.

The Paideia Group consists of 22 notables from education. They came together, presumably at Adler's instigation, to redefine "the general learning that should be the possession of all human beings." (This is the meaning Adler gives for *paideia,* which he indicates is pronounced *py-DEE-a.*) His hope is that his little book will convert people who are in a position to influence school curriculum into believers in his version of a common education.

The Paideia plan, which applies to the basic 12 years of public schooling, would give "the same quality of schooling to all." It would do so by eliminating all tracking and by organizing instruction for all students into three distinct but overlapping modes—the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills, and the enlargement of understanding.

Any electives or specialization would be "wholly inappropriate." The only exception would be the choice of a foreign language (but not the fact of having to study one). Otherwise, all students would study the same curriculum.

Adler would take care of individual differences "by administering [the program] sensitively and flexibly in ways that accord with whatever differences must be taken into account." Remedial teaching "should be available whenever it is needed so that no child is ever allowed to fall irremediably behind, as is now the case."

Adler is more realistic in his suggestions for the three modes of teaching. The first, *the acquisition of knowledge,* amounts to what is usually meant by the liberal arts—language, literature, and the fine arts; mathematics and the natural sciences; history, geography, and the social sciences. Young people should pursue these subjects "with concentration and continuity," he says.

The second mode, *the development of skills,* involves coaching and drill, two things he finds "nowadays . . . much too frequently absent from basic schooling."

Finally, *the enlargement of understanding* would occur through students' being taught in the Socratic mode. Teachers would ask questions and lead discussions, always avoiding the role of "expert." The purpose would be to help students "raise their minds up" to greater understanding and appreciation of the basic ideas of Western civilization.

Adler's ideas are both challenging to teachers and open to challenge by them. One can, I think, characterize his recommendations as simplistic. They are certainly presented in too few words. Of 84 text pages in the book, 10 are blank. The reader needs more print. For example, the whole question of discipline is covered in three paragraphs, with no prescription more specific than the statement that "students must be required to behave in class."

I suspect that the defects of the book occur because the 22 members of the Paideia Group—even counting AFT president Albert Shanker—do not include a single classroom teacher. It's as though a group of distinguished citizens, none of them doctors, laid out the direction for cancer research. The intentions may be sincere, but. . . .

For all the book's limitations, Adler's ideas are interesting. He is right to find unacceptable the schools' inability to educate the children of the poor to the same standard as the children of the well-to-do. But the remedy—a single track—depends on two dubious assumptions: that the schools can attract the highly educated teachers his program will need and that they can do better at remediation than they do now. What makes him think either of these will be true?

Still, Adler has promised a second book with guidelines for putting the program into effect. Perhaps it will offer some answers. In any case let's hope classroom teachers have more say in his next effort.

Reviewed by John M. Gray, retired English department chair, Nauset Regional High School, North Eastham, Massachusetts.

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YOU AND THE LAW

Law Requires 'Meaningful' Education for Handicapped

How does the Supreme Court interpret Public Law 94-142's requirement that handicapped children receive a "free appropriate public education"?

In its only decision so far on the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, the Court in June 1982 affirmed by 6-3 the right of all handicapped students to receive the personalized instruction and supportive services they need to benefit from their individual educational program.

But the Court held that handicapped children do *not* have a right to the best possible education that would "maximize their potential" for learning. The Court specifically struck down the standard used by the lower court, which held that under the Act, handicapped students are entitled to an equal educational opportunity "commensurate with the education available to nonhandicapped children."

NEA had filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case (*Hendrick Hudson School District* v. *Rowley*), along with the National Association for the Deaf and other organizations, asking the Supreme Court to affirm the lower court decision.

Although the Court construed P.L. 94-142 strictly, its decision upheld the law's fundamental tenets. These include the handicapped student's right to individualized instruction, sufficient support services to benefit from education, and instruction and services at public expense, as well as parents' rights to due process, judicial review, and involvement in developing individualized education programs.

The decision is a setback to advocacy efforts to expand the law's protection beyond the strict requirements of P.L. 94-142, since the Court described the Act as one of basic, not equal, educational opportunity.

The case began when the parents of Amy Rowley, a profoundly deaf child enrolled in regular elementary school classes in New York, filed suit to require the state to provide Amy with a qualified sign language interpreter.

The lower court found that Amy could not understand 41 percent of what was said in her classes, even with the FM wireless hearing device and individual tutoring she had been provided.

For example, Amy could not understand what was being said when speakers turned their backs, when more than one person was talking at a time, or when filmstrips were shown. Amy would be able to understand 100 percent of what was being said if she had an interpreter, said the lower court.

The Supreme Court decided, however, that Amy didn't need an interpreter because she was doing well without one and had been provided special services that enabled her to benefit from her education.

The Court recognized that Amy was an exceptional student whose lipreading skills, residual hearing, and high intelligence made her a special case. The decision does not mean that other deaf children will be unable to get interpreter services or total communication programs, which emphasize communication with a deaf person by simultaneously speaking or mouthing words and signing them. But students must show that they cannot benefit from their education without such a service.

The Supreme Court decision held that there is not one standard for evaluating the level of services required for a free, appropriate public education under P.L. 94-142, but that the education must be sufficient to confer some educational benefit on the child.

The justices who joined the majority decision agreed that Congress did not intend to give handicapped children a right to "strict equality of opportunity of services." That, they argued, would require impossible measurements and comparisons.

But the Act does require that handicapped children have access to "meaningful" education, the Court held. The decision reads, "The 'basic floor of opportunity' provided by the Act consists of access to specialized instruction and related services which are individually designed to provide educational benefit to the handicapped child."

The Court held that a state satisfies its requirement of providing a child with a free appropriate public education "by providing personalized instruction with sufficient supportive services to permit the child to benefit educationally from that instruction."

UNIPHOTO—Tim Keating

Under federal law, deaf and other handicapped students must have access to "meaningful"—but not necessarily equal—education, the Supreme Court has ruled.

The court limited its authority to decide if the educational program a state provides is the most suitable. That decision should be left, the justices said, to the state education agency in cooperation with the child's parents, not the courts.

Justices White, Brennan and Marshall dissented from the majority opinion. They found that a standard that merely requires some "educational benefit" falls far short of what P.L. 94-142 intended.

The dissent argued that the Act requires a special education program "intended to eliminate the effects of the handicap, at least to the extent that the child will be given an equal opportunity to learn if that is reasonably possible."

They also disagreed with the standard of review, finding that Congress intended courts to undertake a full and searching inquiry into any aspect of a handicapped child's education.

In sum, the Supreme Court held that the Education for All Handicapped Children Act is a necessary law for the benefit of the nation. However, advocates concerned with the education of handicapped children will be watching to assure that the Supreme Court's decision is correctly interpreted and implemented.

—Sheilah Vance

YOU AND YOUR RETIREMENT

Disability: Sober Planning Now Can Protect You Later

Advances in medical science mean that many more Americans are surviving what used to be fatal illnesses and accidents—but only after long periods of convalescence.

While most of us would prefer not to think about the grim possibility that we'll at some time experience a disabling illness or injury, statistics show that being medically unable to work for 90 or more days in a row is relatively common, especially among older Americans. By age 62, some 44 in every 1,000 adults have suffered a long-term (90 days or more) disability.

Between 10 and 15 percent of the entire population has a potentially disabling medical condition, according to Health Insurance Association of America estimates.

If you become unable to work because of an injury or lengthy illness, you'll have three possible sources of income (besides depleting private savings or accepting charity from friends and relatives). These are government-sponsored benefits, employer-provided benefits, and individually purchased disability income insurance.

Traditionally, the first two have been the most important. But recent developments—the poor state of the economy, resulting cutbacks in government social programs, and slower growth of employer-paid fringe benefits—have brought private disability insurance to the fore. Many insurance experts now consider disability insurance just as important as life insurance, if not more so.

In some states, Association members and their dependents are eligible for Social Security disability benefits. Unfortunately, these benefits don't begin until you've been disabled for at least five months, and they're difficult to qualify for unless you have a *very* severe disability.

Getting Social Security disability benefits has recently become tougher than ever. The Social Security Administration is under pressure to reduce the number of recipients. Since March 1981, over 150,000 people have been dropped from the disability rolls, thanks to much stricter procedures for reviewing eligibility.

Many of these reviews have resulted in bureaucratic nightmares. When you're declared ineligible, your disability benefit checks are automatically stopped. Even if you're able to appeal the decision successfully, the process can take months or even years, during which you're without benefits.

Most active Association members can also obtain some degree of disability coverage through employer sick leave plans, board-paid short- and long-term disability plans, or sick day pools. Other possible sources of income include teachers' pension plans and group life insurance programs.

However, budget cutbacks in many districts have seriously curtailed the expansion of such benefits. To compensate, more and more members are looking at individually purchased long-term disability insurance. Even those covered by employer-provided plans sometimes choose to supplement their coverage with a "wraparound" plan designed either to provide income during their group plan's waiting period or to take up when their group plan leaves off.

Since they're designed for the average worker who retires in his or her 60's, few private plans provide coverage after age 70. What's more, the cost of this insurance becomes very high as you get older. So these plans are best suited to those members who plan to retire from education early and supplement their retirement income through full- or part-time work in another field. If you plan to retire later in life, you'd be better served by a strong savings program.

Your Association is working to see that you're adequately covered through all three levels of disability protection. The NEA is part of Save Our Security, a coalition of more than 100 organizations dedicated to maintaining and improving the Social Security system.

At the state and local levels, NEA affiliates work hard to support bargaining for short- and long-term disability programs as a vital fringe benefit. And in many states, Association-sponsored individual long-term disability income insurance plans are available that can either supplement existing programs or provide coverage on their own.

As an aid to checking the adequacy of your present coverage, your Association publishes a guide to the understanding and purchase of long-term disability insurance. For a free copy, write to NEA Special Services, Teachers Services Center, 51 Monroe Street, Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850.

—NEA Special Services

Your NEA

REACHING OUT

Candidates, Don't Miss Advance Filing Deadline

An NEA president, vice-president, and two members of the Executive Committee will be nominated and elected by the 1983 NEA Representative Assembly, which meets July 2-5 in Philadelphia.

If you plan to be a candidate, contact the Executive Office at NEA Center for complete information, including an official filing form. If you want your photo and statement to be printed in *NEA Today*, you must file by April 1.

Submission of filing forms does not constitute nomination for office.

In order to run for office, you must have been an Active or Educational Support member of NEA for the two years immediately preceding the election.

In the event that the election of the president creates a vacancy in the office of secretary-treasurer effective September 1, 1983, then delegates to the 1983 Representative Assembly will elect an individual to that office also. Anyone interested in becoming a candidate for secretary-treasurer—should a vacancy occur—may contact the Executive Office.

When Writing NEA . . .

Except where otherwise indicated, the address is 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

It's Nomination Time For Two NEA Awards

NEA's Standing Committee on Peace and International Relations is now accepting nominations for two awards it presents annually at the NEA Representative Assembly.

Any NEA member who has furthered international understanding through outstanding leadership, actions, and support is eligible to be nominated for the Irvamae Applegate International Understanding Award. Nominees should reflect the philosophy and principles of NEA's Peace and International Relations Program.

The Dorros Peace Trophy will be awarded to the NEA state or local affiliate deemed to have made the most significant contribution to the "global community" concept. Previous winners have been state Associations in Maryland, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Massachusetts and the St. Albans City Education Association in Vermont. Eligible Associations should not hesitate to nominate themselves.

Deadline for nominations for both awards is April 22. For information write to NEA Peace and International Relations at NEA Center.

Planning Your Vacation?

Interested in learning more about upcoming NEA travel opportunities? Be sure to add your name to the NEA Travel Service's "Preferred Travelers Mailing List." Preferred Travelers receive advance announcements of all Association-sponsored discount travel offerings.

The dollar is stronger abroad now than it's been in years, so this is the time to think about the dream vacation you've been putting off (Europe? Africa? the Orient?).

Even if you stay in the U.S. (Hawaii? EPCOT Center?), your Association has tour packages you can trust—quality group programs that have been carefully screened to provide the best possible value for your hard-earned vacation dollar.

To become a Preferred Traveler, send your name and address on a postcard to NEA Travel Service, Teachers Services Center, NEA Special Services, 51 Monroe St., Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850.

Agriculture Project Needs Teacher Ideas

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is initiating "Agriculture in the Classroom"—an effort to integrate information about agriculture into existing curricula and to help students explore the interdependence of agriculture and the rest of the U.S. economy.

NEA and the American Farm Bureau Federation, cooperating with the project, have asked the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) to solicit teacher ideas about topics that should be given priority in developing classroom materials.

Farm labor? Animal welfare? Agricultural exports and the balance of payments? Weather? Agricultural cooperatives? Acid rain? Trade barriers? Irrigation? Predator control? Soil conservation? Others?

Let NFIE know what *you* think. Send a letter or postcard to Agriculture in the Classroom, NFIE, at NEA Center.

NEA Names Next Executive Director

NEA President Willard McGuire has announced the selection of Don Cameron, 45, as NEA's next executive director.

Cameron, currently assistant executive director, was chosen in January by the NEA Executive Committee to succeed Terry Herndon, who has announced his resignation from the Association's top staff job effective May 31.

Cameron began his career as a high school history teacher in Birmingham, Michigan. He served as executive director of the Florida Teaching Profession (FTP-NEA) from 1976 to 1979.

LOOKING BACK

How much is a copy of the April/May 1982 *NEA Reporter* worth? To Anne David of California, exactly $2,065. That's the amount of back pay she had coming as a former teacher in the Defense Department's overseas schools. David and more than 20,000 other teachers were part of a $60 million class action lawsuit won by NEA's Overseas Education Association in 1975.

Her sister's father-in-law—California community college professor Chuck Williams—noticed her name on the *Reporter*'s list of overseas teachers who had never collected their back pay. A quick phone call confirmed that it was indeed the same Anne David.

David not only collected her money but also alerted another former colleague who was due back pay.

Since we last visited the "zoo room" at Ohio's Hudson Junior High ("People," *NEA Today*, October 1982), Bobby the Japanese quail has died. "The whole school cried," reports earth science teacher Gladys Gill. This turned out to be the "Year of the Ferret," says Gill, who now has seven of the weasel-like mammals, one of which—perhaps inevitably—is named "Ferret Fawcett."

Gill spends $400 a year from her own pocket to help feed her classroom menagerie. Even a rabbit that isn't quite potty-trained fails to dampen her spirits. Gill says her philosophy is summed up in these words of Albert Schweitzer: "Life outside a person is an extension of life within him. This compels him to be a part of it and accept responsibility for all creatures, great and small."

50 Years Ago

The March 1933 *Journal of the National Education Association* carried a suggested script for a school or college assembly. An excerpt follows:

"Scene: A large black pot, with steps on each side, in the center of the stage. In front of the pot a group of foreigners is gathered around Uncle Sam, clamoring for admittance to the pot.

"Uncle Sam: My foreign friends, you are welcome. Before you enter the melting pot, won't you tell us what you bring with you? . . .

"Englishman: My country gives to you the love of political freedom; the drama of Shakespeare; the poetry of Milton, Tennyson, and Keats.

"Frenchman: I bring to you the inspiration of Millet and Corot, the discoveries of Pasteur and Curie; the friendship of Lafayette. . . . and so on for other nationalities. As each person finishes his speech, Uncle Sam takes the native flag and indicates that the characters are to enter the melting pot. To the tune of 'America,' they come down the steps of the melting pot. . . .

TAKING A STAND

Board Calls for New Push To Represent College Faculty

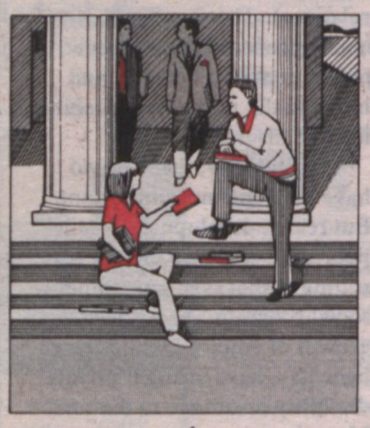
The NEA Board of Directors has adopted a sweeping plan that sets a basic organizing objective for the Association in the years ahead: to represent *all* employees in the nation's education community.

The Board reaffirmed NEA's commitment to organizing higher education faculty as one of the key elements of the "House of Education," along with elementary and secondary teachers and school support personnel.

As of today, some 60,000 postsecondary faculty are NEA members. Roughly equal numbers belong to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). But the vast majority—about 600,000—remain unorganized.

The plan adopted by the Board at its December 1982 meeting calls, among other things, for NEA to—

- Create a Higher Education Secretariat to coordinate programs, identify unmet needs, and assist the Standing Committee on Higher Education.



- Encourage NEA affiliates to use their legislative clout on behalf of higher education concerns.
- Build higher education involvement into all regional meetings, instructional and human rights conferences, and other appropriate NEA meetings.
- Sponsor a major higher education conference annually, open to all faculty. "Influences on the Higher Education Enterprise" is the theme of the 1983 conference, scheduled for March 11-13 in Washington, D.C.
- Begin a four-times-a-year lecture series, with the first year's lectures to focus on higher education issues. The initial lecture, to be held on the evening of March 11 in conjunction with the higher education conference, will feature John Brademas, president of New York University and former member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Indiana.

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

MONEY

Mutual Funds: A Primer

Even with as little as $1,000 or so to invest, you *can* buy admission to that roller coaster called the stock market, complete with the benefits of expert financial advice and a large, well-balanced portfolio usually available only to the high flyer. You can invest in a *mutual stock fund.*

The theory behind mutual funds is simple. An investment company pools the money of many individuals by selling shares in the fund. Then it invests the money according to its particular investment goals. After subtracting a management fee, the company distributes any profits back to the investors —by paying out cash, issuing more shares, or increasing each share's value.

Obviously, if the investments lose value, the fund's shares do, too. That means mutual funds are not the place to put your emergency savings. Keep that money in a savings account that is safe and accessible.

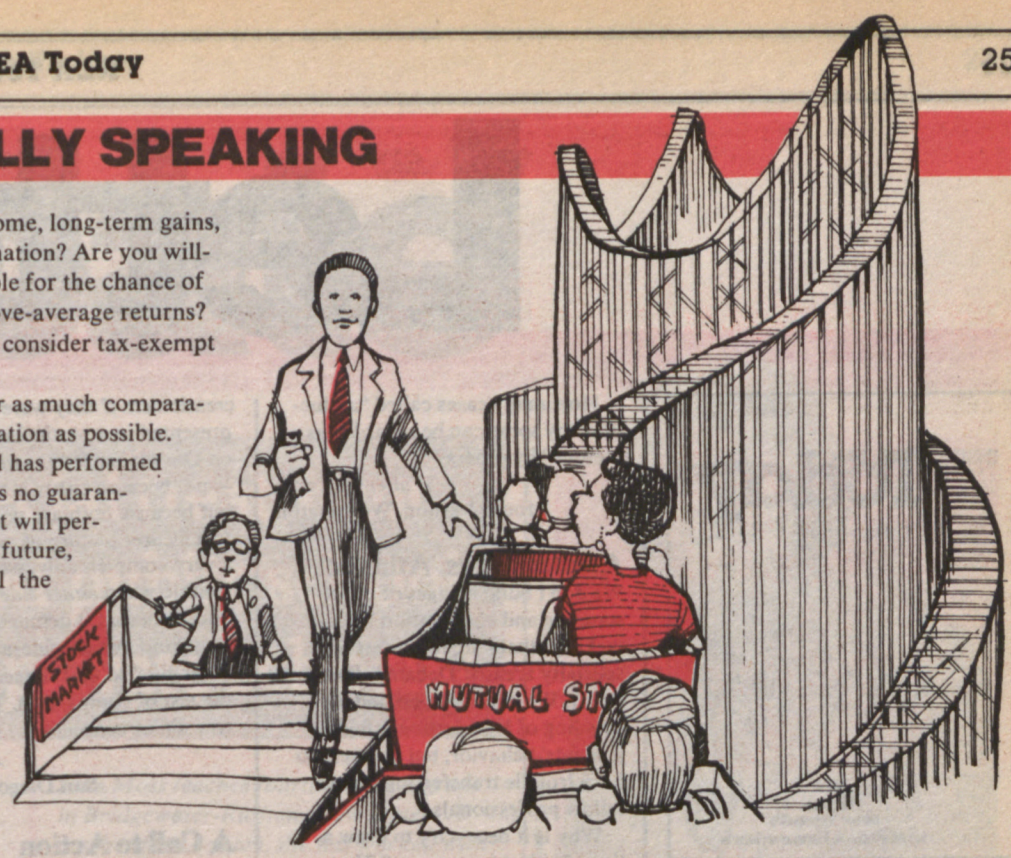
There are mutual funds that invest in items other than stocks —bonds and government securities, for example. Some funds charge a commission or *load* on your investment. Others, called *no-loads,* don't.

Mutual funds also vary widely in their liquidity (the ease with which you can withdraw your money) and in types of services they offer (some allow telephone purchase and withdrawal privileges, for instance).

If you're contemplating a mutual fund as a way to enter the stock market, here are the steps to follow:

1. Decide what your investment goals are. Do you want current income, long-term gains, or a combination? Are you willing to gamble for the chance of making above-average returns? Should you consider tax-exempt funds?

2. Gather as much comparative information as possible. How a fund has performed in the past is no guarantee of how it will perform in the future, but it's still the best indication for the average investor. Many business publications do yearly surveys of mutual fund performance. For listings of funds, write to the Investment Company Institute, 1775 K St., N.W., Washington, DC 20006 or (for $1) to the No-Load Mutual Fund Association, Valley Forge, PA 19481. Write or call any fund that seems to fit your general needs and ask for its *prospectus.*



3. Make sure the particulars of the fund fit your needs. What is the minimum investment and withdrawal? Are there commissions or withdrawal fees? Is the fund part of a "family" of funds operated by the same management company? This is a plus, since you can usually switch your money from one fund to another very easily as the market and your financial goals change.

4. Decide how much to invest. If you plan to add to your original investment, invest a set amount regularly. That way, you'll buy more shares when prices are low, fewer shares when prices are high.

—NEA Special Services

HEALTH

Modify Your Diet and Lower Your Cancer Odds

One of every four Americans will eventually develop some form of cancer. Factors known or suspected to play a part in determining who gets cancer and who doesn't include heredity, environment, lifestyle, exposure to chemicals and radiation, and maybe even certain viruses.

Our likelihood of cancer is also affected by what we eat. After carefully examining everything science now knows about the link between nutrition and cancer, an expert panel of the National Academy of Sciences recently issued a list of recommendations on how we can modify our diets to lessen the risk.

The panel's advice falls into two categories: foods we should avoid or at least cut down on, and foods we should eat more often.

In the first category, the panel places such foods as smoked sausages and fish, ham, bacon, frankfurters, and processed meats, because they contain a number of known cancer-causing substances, including nitrosamines and polycyclic hydrocarbons.

The panel also suggests we reduce consumption of both saturated and unsaturated fats by at least 25 percent. High-fat diets have been linked to cancers of the colon, prostate, and breast.

Salt-cured and pickled foods should also be limited, and alcohol taken only in moderation, according to the panel.

On the other hand, the panel recommends that we increase our intake of fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C and beta-carotene. Vitamin C has been shown to inhibit the formation of some cancer-causing substances, and foods rich in this vitamin seem to lower the risk of cancers of the stomach and esophagus.

Beta-carotene, a precursor of vitamin A, is present in dark green leafy vegetables and dark yellow fruits and vegetables, such as carrots and spinach. Beta-carotene-rich diets are associated with a reduced risk of cancers of the lung, breast, bladder, skin, and other organs.

Additional foods recommended by the panel as containing natural cancer-inhibiting substances are vegetables in the cabbage family—broccoli, cauliflower, kale, Brussels sprouts —and whole grains.

Interestingly enough, the panel's report does not address the questions of caffeine, dietary fiber, selenium and vitamin E, or food additives—all widely thought to influence the probability of developing cancer. The panel felt the data on these substances were not yet conclusive enough for any firm recommendations.

However, the report does note that many food additives have not been adequately tested for long-term risks. It also advises against taking megadoses of vitamin supplements, since evidence of their value in preventing cancer is lacking, while the danger of toxic overdoses is real.

Copies of the 600-page report are available for $13.50 each, postage paid, from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20418; a check or money order must accompany your order.

—NEA Special Services

LEISURE

How Good Is Your Memory?

Have you ever been at a party and panicked when a familiar-looking stranger walked up and you couldn't remember her name? Have you gone shopping, only to get home and realize you forgot something very important? A few simple tricks can help prevent such embarrassing and annoying occurrences.

Repetition: When you're introduced to someone new, repeat his or her name immediately in your greeting. Then try to work it into the conversation several more times. Not only will this help you remember the person's name and how to pronounce it, but it also sounds friendlier.

Rhyming: Sometimes a person's name will lend itself to a simple rhyme that will link it with some characteristic you can use to aid your memory. For instance, "Mrs. *Hurst* teaches *first* grade," or "Mr. *Blair* has red *hair.*" Be careful with the rhymes you choose; if you think "Mr. Pratt is fat," you might walk up to him and say, "Hello, Mr. Fat!"

Mental images: Another way to remember things is to make up ridiculous mental pictures. For some reason, our minds seem to retain images best. You might want to remember Mr. Packard's name by imagining an antique automobile with his face on the grill . . . or Mrs. Schaeffer's by imagining her carrying a giant electric shaver around.

Mental images can also help you remember lists of items. If you have to go to the bank, the grocery store, and the post office on a Saturday morning, imagine yourself robbing a bank using a stalk of celery as a weapon and making off with a bag full of stamps instead of money. When you remember that one picture, you'll remember everything you have to do.

These simple methods for improving your memory can do wonders. There's only one hitch: you have to remember to use them!

—NEA Special Services

Letters

'A Nation of Originals'

Your feature "A Nation of Originals" (*Jan.-Feb.*) was an inspiring article on the strength of diversity. However, it left out some of the immigrant groups whose contributions helped make this country great.

1983 marks 300 years since the first Germans arrived in America. The Declaration of Independence was published in German one day before it appeared in English. One in six Americans has some German heritage.

We should be aware of *all* ethnic groups who have contributed to our country's growth—not only the visibly distinguishable.

Carol Cozad
Bellingham, Washington

'Professor, Confessor'

I just finished reading your interview with Father Paul A. Gopaul (*Jan.-Feb.*). He made an incorrect statement. The Roman Catholic Church *does* have a fixed position on birth control.

Marie Green
Seattle, Washington

Mr. Gopaul states that his father died as a "Holy Roller." This is a derogatory term used in the same sense as "the papist church." The professor-confessor's prejudice is showing! In his position he should know better than to use this belittling term to describe some Christians.

I do agree, however, with Mr. Gopaul's view that tuition tax credits are "ugly." They are indeed. They are a violation of the First Amendment.

Tom Relph
New York, New York

Parental Kidnapping

Re your article "When Daddy Is a Kidnapper" (*Jan.-Feb.*): If teachers are to get dragged into the child custody scene, why stop with the child-snatching part of it? Why not address the whole problem, including bad custody assignment law, an overwhelming tradition of misplaced sentiment and bias, an often myopic judiciary?

Mama has been regarded—until recently—as definitively and finally the parent of choice. In violation of every principle of statutory law, children were awarded to the female parent regardless of their best interests or preference.

How many cases called "abduction" by some can be regarded as "rescue" by others?

Walter A. Coole
Mount Vernon, Washington

Academics vs. Athletics

We don't build bridges of understanding and cooperation by attacking others' high-interest or specialty areas ("Debate," *Jan.-Feb.*). We may have an understanding of how feelings affect students' behavior, but we seem to have trouble transferring that to fellow professionals.

Why is it necessary to draw a line of either/or support? That approach leads to suspicion and mistrust that shuts off communication and willingness to make the effort to understand.

Let's work together rather than against one another to correct the inadequacies that exist in *all* areas and improve *all* programs.

Bill Burby
Vashon, Washington

'The Winds of War'

Your curriculum guide for the TV program "The Winds of War" (*Jan.-Feb.*) is an excellent source of study not only for students but for us who are retired and enjoy refreshing our education.

We are looking forward to the program and to enriching our lives discussing the questions set forth by Ms. Hopkins.

Josephine Jelinek
Bayville, New Jersey

More on Textbooks

I do not agree with you that the use of old textbooks ("Textbooks Under Fire," *December 1982*) is detrimental to a good education. Rather, it should be a challenge. What a wonderful opportunity for students to use library resources, newspapers, and television to update their own history, science, or whatever it might be.

A *good* teacher doesn't need a textbook, I've always been told—and I am in my 43rd year of teaching!

Donna H. Carr
Bolivar, Tennessee

There is nothing wrong with presenting Darwin's "Theory of Evolution" as a theory. That is in fact what it is. It is one explanation of how we became human, based upon the best empirical observation available. It will not rise or fall upon being judged against other theories (even those based in "faith"). It will rise or fall based upon whether or not it ultimately answers all possible questions better than any other theory.

So books should not be left out of the reach of the student just because they fail to teach the "theory of evolution" as sacrosanct. They should make all possibilities available to the student; then the teacher should be there as a guide to help the students sort it all out and decide for themselves where the most fruitful path lies.

I would expect that the real teacher would present thoughts on creationism if they were *not* presented in a particular text, or on Darwinism if that were ignored—not because either is absolute, but because both are necessary to a clearer picture of our place in a very complex universe. We are in trouble when *either side* is so uncertain that it demands elimination from our consideration of the other side, so that it need not face the test of comparison. That is the true sin of censorship.

Allen Miller
San Diego, California

A Call to Action

We as teachers all too often spend time criticizing and discounting ourselves, the teaching profession, and public education in general.

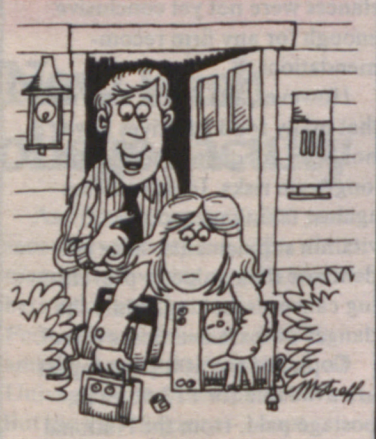
We all too willingly accept the blame when charges of ineffective and inefficient educational policies and practices are leveled at the teaching profession. We quietly and lamely make excuses when students fail to achieve. We even blame each other: the high school teacher blames the junior high teacher, who in turn blames the elementary teacher.

We complain to each other. We throw up our hands in despair when confronted by parents. We blame the students. We look beseechingly to the board of education to solve our problems. We sit in silence wringing our hands and draining our energies by nurturing our resentment because "they" are making our lives miserable.

What are the alternatives? We can be honest with parents and share with them and the community at large our concern over the dwindling financial support for public education—and our concern that judicial and legislative mandates are causing us to spend increasing amounts of time doing paperwork unrelated to students' learning.

We can stop blaming our professional organizations because "they" don't solve our problems. It is *we* who must use our creativity to solve *our* problems. . . . The power resides within us, individually and collectively. All we need to do is use it.

Al Fox
Los Angeles, California



"Let's see, you've got your calculator, word processor, personal computer, VTR disc, electric typewriter, cassette recorder, and spare batteries. Have a good day at school."

The Good Old Days

My father was a dollar-a-day field hand when I was a schoolchild (1923-37).

I thought my two-mile walk to school and back each day, carrying a brown paper sack containing a small wormy apple, a boiled egg, and a peanut butter sandwich was OK. I did not know then that I was being so maltreated and subject to so much disease and malnutrition. There were very few days that I was allowed to skip school because of inclement weather, either.

Today I am a retired schoolteacher and I get so sick of hearing your sob-sister [letter writers] crying, wringing their hands and pleading for more air-conditioned buses and hot lunches for the poor starving children.

What would your staff clinical psychologists say prevented me from dying, in my youth, from malnutrition or overexertion?

Jack R. Huffmyer
Proctor, Oklahoma

'Stop Mimicking UAW'

Few organizations irritate me more than yours, and it really jars me when I have to admit that I am a dues-paying member.

You NEA people in charge really should make an effort to represent the views of the more conservative members. I think you would do well to be more realistic about the need for more budget cuts.

You don't need to mimic the UAW or the Teamsters. You need to know that you are representing a different type of union member.

Stay out of partisan politics, attack issues, quit sleeping with Gary Hart. . . .

Jack Fish
Brighton, Colorado

'Philosophical Baloney'

As a classroom teacher I am glad for our local E.A. and the Michigan Education Association, since I can see some results for the dues I pay. But as for the NEA, it is a lot of philosophical baloney. All I hear from you is an extreme political view that is very socialistic.

The NEA is a powerful union—perhaps the strongest in the U.S.A. For about 10 years you have had tremendous political clout. In fact, after every national election you brag about how you influenced the people to vote your way.

The Moral Majority has stood on the sidelines and watched the way you folk have operated. Now in the past few years they have begun to use some of the tactics the NEA has used. This has the NEA bent out of shape. Now in your publications you blast away at this group.

In no way am I identified with the Moral Majority, but I must admire their new political strategy. Quit your groaning!

Bob Nelson
Grand Rapids, Michigan

I am writing in response to the "President's Viewpoint" in the December 1982 *NEA Today*.

When I took Government in high school, I was taught that the democratic process was to support the candidates who believe as I do, to vote for them, and to let the majority rule. This in no way excludes diversity.

I would conclude, contrary to the opinion of Willard McGuire, that diversity is *less* safe today than yesterday, for organizations such as the NEA, ACLU, and NOW are developing hate programs by spreading lies about the New Right in an effort to begin a new era of witchhunting against people who do not agree with the liberal philosophy of these organizations.

Guy Forsythe
Westerville, Ohio

'Much Improved'

As a teacher for 14 years, I've read many issues of the NEA newspaper. I remember feeling that past issues have not been particularly "inspired"—but this is certainly not the case lately.

Issues of late have been interesting, pertinent, and lively. Many of my colleagues feel the same way. The paper is much improved.

Keep up the fine work!

Carol Cross
Mount Clemens, Michigan

I want to tell you what a good paper *NEA Today* is. I have read every article and am amazed at the wealth of news of what teacher groups are doing today.

Please continue to keep us informed. You are doing a great service to teachers.

Mary E. Laxton
Zanesville, Ohio

'Regions' Questioned

I enjoy the format of the *NEA Today* as it has been changed. It does a better job of reflecting the profession it represents.

But looking at the states that are put under the different headings on the "State Side" page (Montana under "Pacific," Kansas under "West"), one must ask, Is this section edited by someone who has forgotten U.S. geography and the locations of the states? By someone born and raised on the east coast who has never ventured outside that area? By someone who studied early American history and believes everything west of the Mississippi is "West"?

George W. Ditman
Modesto, California

Ed. note: Rather than adhering to traditional geographic designations, we've been following NEA's system of grouping the state affiliates into six regions each containing roughly equal numbers of Association members. Apologies for the occasional confusion this causes!

What's your opinion? NEA members are cordially invited to use this page to exchange ideas with their 1.7 million colleagues around the nation. Correspondence should be addressed to "Letters," *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Debate

Is lack of special treatment pushing gifted public school students into private schools?

Jackson Progress-Argus

YES

Kathleen Pinckney taught in Georgia public schools for 25 years. For 10 years, she coordinated programs for gifted students in Jackson, Ga. A member of NEA/GAE-Retired, Pinckney has four children, all of whom were classified as gifted. They attended public schools.

In our efforts to help the slower learning or average child, are we penalizing academically gifted children and driving them from public to private schools? Where good private schools are available and where parents—even at great sacrifice—can afford them, yes.

There are many reasons, but two factors—personnel and money—apply in all school systems, I believe. Regardless of their dedication, enthusiasm, creativity, or flexibility, teachers and administrators are handicapped without adequate funds. So personnel and money go hand in hand.

Teachers don't have to be as gifted as their students. They must be confident, knowledgeable about their subject area, and able to respond positively to children. They must know how to direct and inspire students to find answers for themselves.

But too often teachers are threatened by questions gifted students ask. Feeling guilty, they will either ignore the students or evade their questions. This happens when teachers are burdened with heavy class loads, discipline problems, excessive record-keeping tasks, and lack of flexibility with grouping.

Administrators—strapped with low budgets and government regulations on grouping—often sacrifice gifted programs, rationalizing their actions by arguing that the gifted child will cope regardless of the circumstances. Unfortunately, the general public tends to agree.

The parents of a gifted child, on the other hand, feel the 12 years of school are the most important in their child's preparation for life. They see private schools as providing academic excellence—through small classes that allow students to develop the discipline necessary for mastering fundamentals, sticking to tasks, organizing time, and gaining satisfaction and pride in a job well done. They also see private schools as building gifted children's self-confidence, helping them realize they aren't "different" because of their intelligence.

Parents regard standardized test scores as an important factor in determining whether or not their children will be accepted in college. They feel that public schools don't prepare children well for tests.

Another criticism parents have is that athletics is the only area in public schools where a child's gifts are rewarded.

Can public schools do more for gifted children than they are now doing? Are parents' criticisms justified? In many instances, yes.

Schools should provide more flexible scheduling. Even though it is an administrative headache, it is well worth the effort.

Students should be allowed to take mastery tests. If they prove worthy, they should be exempted from regular courses and allowed to take ones that are more challenging.

Smaller classes in academic subjects with students grouped according to ability are essential.

Georgia has made great strides in gifted education in recent years. But even with these efforts—the Governor's Honors Program, a summer residential program for gifted students, and one or more persons working in gifted programs in every school system—we've just begun to scratch the surface. The rural counties, for example—with tight budgets and few community resources—have problems with teacher recruitment.

Private schools that for many years struggled for survival are now thriving. They are more selective in hiring than public schools can be and have higher standards for accepting students—even so, many have waiting lists. In the Atlanta area, good private schools draw students from a radius of 60 miles.

When you add the cost of transportation to tuition, it's obvious that the parents who patronize these schools are making great sacrifices to give their children what they believe is the best education.

I believe that public schools can be far superior to any other. But after spending many years in the classroom and watching educators' energies being directed toward average and slow learners, I feel that our schools too often ignore the gifted and push them into private schools.

Martha DeBlieu

NO

Joan Moss teaches fourth and fifth grade in Bridgewater-Raritan, New Jersey. A teacher for 18 years, she has worked with gifted students for six years. Moss serves on the NJEA Committee for Exceptional Children and the NEA Caucus for Educators of Exceptional Children.

Though I read that private school enrollment is on the increase, I don't believe that gifted and talented (G/T) students are leaving public schools in districts where services are provided to meet their special needs. And there is evidence that many such school districts exist throughout the nation.

It's true that interest in G/T education in public schools has been erratic. There was an upswing in concern after the Sputnik scare in the 1950's. And in the early 1970's—as worldwide technological competition again made its impact—the public renewed its interest. A 1972 federal law concerning the education of G/T children stimulated many public schools to focus on students with special abilities.

Although funding for this law was short-lived, many states and local school districts that previously hadn't provided any services mobilized their resources and initiated programs.

Concerned experts had been working in the field all along, but this renewed emphasis gave impetus to more research and new schools of thought. The majority of studies were conducted in public schools where materials for the gifted were developed and tested.

In 1972, the U.S. Office of Education identified characteristics of persons labeled *gifted*. This breakdown led to the development of programs for gifted students: self-contained classes (often cross-graded), resource rooms, itinerant teachers who met with students at specified times, magnet schools (full- or part-time), ungraded or continuous-progress programs, temporary service (for special projects), bilingual programs, and differentiated materials and instructional techniques in regular classrooms.

In some communities, parents—concerned about their children's special needs—increasingly gained options for their education. In my own district, our G/T program predated the national one and has been a real-estate selling point for years.

The selection of program type is based on district philosophy, parental influence, and budget constraints. Although some federal funds were initially provided to carry out gifted programs, most states and districts have been on their own. This accounts for the diversity and disparity among programs.

G/T programs and in-service workshops for public school teachers are on the increase. In some districts, teachers get tuition assistance and release time to participate in workshops.

In light of the increased options available in many areas, the continued development of programs, materials, and teacher training, and some responsiveness to parental influence, I don't believe that G/T students are leaving public schools for private schools in large numbers.

Most students who transfer to private schools do so because of desegregation concerns, changing neighborhoods, learning difficulties, discipline problems, social maladjustment, or elitism.

It would be unrealistic to say that all G/T children are being served well in the public schools. And should school districts attempt to solve their financial difficulties by eliminating G/T programs and increasing class size, there will be an incentive for many parents to seek an alternative to public education.

The recent shift to block grant funding in some cases may assist in the maintenance of G/T programs. Gifted students are included in the category of "exceptional children." Funds have never been provided for G/T programs, however, as they have been for children with other special needs. Association leaders, educators, and parents must work to safeguard monies awarded to districts.

Once monies come into a district, the use is discretionary. Administrators can and must be sensitized to the need for channeling block grant funds to those students who should be the recipients.

Teachers of gifted students who want to maintain and increase gifted programs should involve themselves in educational councils, curriculum committees, and other decision-making groups. These teachers can be a valuable resource for influencing legislation on both the state and national levels.

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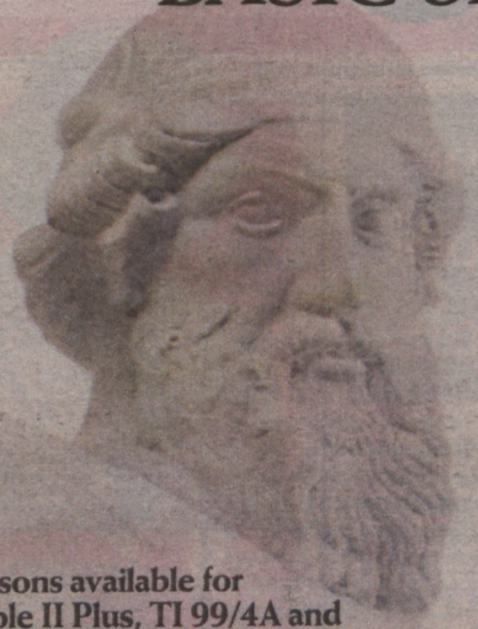

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